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ABSTRACT

The object of this report is to review recent developments in compulsory schooling, to raise what appear to be the critical educational problems alreading facing, or beginning to emerge in, the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and to suggest some of the considerations that might influence policy decisions. Using data from 16 studies of the nations of the OECD, the differing types of schools and various structures of student careers are compared, as are the duration and continuity of schooling among the member nations. Statistics on school attendance and class size and on the education of disadvantaged groups introduce issues in curriculum and educational equity. The changing roles of schools, students, families, and teachers in the educational process are also analyzed for their implications for educational policy, including such issues as those of the hidden curriculum, the characteristics and training of teachers, and the relationship of schools and employment. The problems of educational accountability, control, and evaluation of schools, which are now faced by many OECD countries, are discussed in terms of the demand for community control and the prominent forms of school evaluation. Finally, such continuing and emerging problems are addressed as those surrounding the issues of accountability, resource deployment during times of falling enrollments, teacher competence, and equality of opportunity. (JW)

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COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

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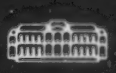

PARIS 1983

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COMPULSORY SCHOOLING IN A CHANGING WORLD

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ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Pursuant to article 1 of the Convention signed in Paris on 14th December, 1960, and which came into force on 30th September, 1961, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shall promote policies designed:

- to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of the world economy;
- to contribute to sound economic expansion in Member as well as non-member countries in the process of economic development; and
- to contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations.

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Compulsory schooling is the core of all modern systems of education ; in all countries, it constitutes the main body of formal education for virtually all children and the whole of formal education for a large percentage of them. Yet in many OECD countries compulsory schooling has, for a number of years, remained largely unexamined ; its goals, processes and practices have tended to be taken as given. The attention of governments and education specialists has been riveted on other sectors of the education system.

The present report was prepared under the programme of OECD's Education Committee, which considered it opportune to take stock of the present-day functions, problems, shortcomings and future prospects of compulsory schooling. In a number of Member countries the centennial of the inauguration of compulsory schooling has recently occurred or will be occurring between now and the year 2000. It is appropriate to comment on such an anniversary simply as an historic event. A more telling reason for taking a close look at compulsory schooling at this juncture in time is that in some countries it is being subjected to an unprecedented wave of criticism that calls for a reasoned response from the authorities responsible for national education services.

Public education authorities and many others concerned with educational matters are fully aware that, after recent years of remarkable quantitative expansion, both structural and organisational imperfections and social injustices persist in their systems that will only be removed by determined efforts to seek new approaches and qualitative improvements. Lost educational opportunities are hard to retrieve and yet far too many children leave school with their potential unfulfilled, especially those coming from less privileged backgrounds. The authorities also recognize the importance of retaining public confidence through difficult economic years.

The object of the report is to review recent developments in compulsory schooling, to raise what appear to be the critical educational problems already facing OECD Member countries or beginning to emerge and to suggest some of the considerations which might influence policy decisions in response to them.

The report derives its principal themes and evidence from sixteen national situation studies, reinforced by several national inquiries into specific issues and problems, illustrations from work completed by or in progress at OECD and detailed background statistics supplied by national education authorities. Important contributions to its preparation were made by four consultants : Professor Hans Brügelmann, Professor John Eggleston, Professor Denis Kallen, and Dr Jon Lauglo.

The report is published on the responsibility of the Secretary-General. Within the Secretariat, John Lowe prepared the text and Monique Solliliage provided the statistical material.

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I

GOALS AND FUNCTIONS

The Setting

Today criticism of compulsory schooling appears to be widespread in a number of OECD Member countries and to be voiced by a wide range of interest groups including politicians, some education authorities themselves, the general public, parents, employers, trade unions and, not least, many young people in their last years at school. This criticism is often accompagnied by a demand for a greater external say in the running of schools and appears to reflect a change in the way some groups wish to relate to them. The media have also taken to publicising alleged educational failings, although it is not always clear whether they are leading or simply reflecting public opinion.

The focus of the criticisms of compulsory education naturally varies with the point of view of the interest group. At the same time, certain lines of criticism recur. The most all-embracing allegation is that, on the one hand, large numbers of young people are leaving school without basic reading, writing, numeracy and communications skills and that, on the other hand, bright pupils are being retarded. Broadening the curriculum has led to the dilution of the basic or core subjects, and the curriculum is often irrelevant to the real world in which the young live. "Modern methods" are seen not to work or to work only for some pupils. The examination system is inefficient and unfair, especially to those with limited or undeveloped verbal facility. It is also argued that the schools are failing in their duty to prepare the young to adapt to active life in adult society ; on the contrary, many young people emerge from school indifferent or positively hostile to the values and concerns of that society. Many critics are concerned about the increase of undisciplined behaviour within and outside the school. Late-twentieth-century society, the more extreme conservative critics would argue, is producing a rising generation of misfits and malcontents. Finally, many school-leavers are ill-equipped to obtain jobs while simultaneously the economy is deprived of the annual intake of skilled manpower that it requires.

Some of this criticism is more intense in certain countries than in others. In many countries the high rate of youth unemployment has led to unprecedented public concern about the effectiveness of the schools and demands that they should be made more accountable to society for the effectiveness of their performance. Nevertheless, the majority of parents are not seriously disaffected and most young people are not unhappy at school. It would also seem that critics underestimate the capacity and will of educational policy-makers, administrators and teachers to adapt to changing needs and pressures. Very often reforms proposed by outsiders are already in train if only on a partial or experimental basis.

More important still, few seriously question the permanence of compulsory education as an established social institution. It is universal in OECD Member countries ; it covers a minimum span of seven years and in many countries lasts much longer ; it is nearly always free ; in principle, at least, it is equally available to all social groups. The root and branch notion of de-schooling and the thesis that schooling does not really affect life chances may have attracted much publicity, but there is no evidence that any country even contemplates diminishing the role of its schools. Compulsory education continues to command a high proportion of available resources and the intention appears to be to reinforce its role rather than to reduce it, even at the expense of other sectors of education. In short, the swell of criticism has not evoked cries of despair or a mood of retrenchment but rather a determination to make it more effective by redefining goals, reordering priorities, reconsidering the allocation of resources and modifying structures and learning processes. Relief from the pressure of numbers which results from the declining birth rate in most but not all OECD Member countries (Ireland, for instance) provides an opportune moment when major qualitative reappraisals may now be considered, especially in view of the structural revolution in the labour market. It is against such a positive background that this report is presented.

Why compulsory ?

At a time when the concept of de-schooling has attracted much notoriety it is useful to ask why in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the principle of placing all children in school for a specified period of time under the majesty of the law was adopted by so many European countries and why, today, countries in the Third World that have only recently become independent believe it necessary to adopt the same principle. The answer, surely, is not that all countries have blindly copied one another or been impelled by the same historical determinism. Rather the answer is that each recognizes that in modern societies it is necessary in order to achieve the greatest good for individual and community to organize and control the education of the young through the creation of a primary societal institution and to ensure that all have equal access to it. Attendance at this institution has then to be compulsory so as to safeguard the right of every child to education. Spokesmen of certain political ideologies may assert that institutionalised compulsory education was introduced only as a device to produce the skilled workers and clerks essential to a capitalist system and that it continues to be manipulated so as to perpetuate stratified class roles. But the fact remains that *all* countries throughout the world, regardless of their conflicting ideologies, seem to find compulsory schooling essential. The onus is upon those spokesmen to explain why this should be so.

In any case, a wide range of goals, aims and motivations was evident from the outset in the establishment of compulsory schooling. In many countries the very concept of compulsion was the subject of intense debate between national and regional government, church, communities and organisations representing the family. In some the development of compulsion was spasmodic and uneven ; in others it only attempted to fill the gaps left by voluntary schooling ; in yet others legislation was comprehensive but for many years incompletely implemented. But however implemented, compulsory education has been universal in the changes it has brought about in the status of the child. His total life style, his availability for work, his apprenticeship to a common language, his self-image as a member of a nation as well as of a community and a family - all these aspects of childhood were permanently changed by the introduction of compulsory schooling.

The idea of "compulsion" is open to several constructions. In Denmark, for example, the law does not prescribe that there shall be compulsory schooling but

that there shall be compulsory education - any parents who choose to educate their own children are at liberty to do so providing that the education given is of the same quality as that given in the state schools. The extent to which parents should be responsible for the education of their children is taken up in Chapter VIII.

"Compulsory" has an oppressive sound which all too easily conjures up the prison-like atmosphere of so many of the early city schools, not to speak of the ominous shadow of the dreaded truant officer. Although its connotation today is meant to be restricted to a legal prescription, there remains, unfortunately, in the popular mind more than a vestige of the old forbidding image. For some young people and for some parents compulsory education simply means compulsory and grudging attendance at school, grudging, at least, when the pupils have passed the age of thirteen or so.

People living in modern societies take it for granted that schooling occupies a significant number of years in the passage through childhood. It is more compelling to register the striking statistic that a young person is now required by law to spend on the average *ten thousand hours* in school. Indeed, it is the very prolongation of compulsory schooling that has led to much of the dissatisfaction with it. To stay willy-nilly in school for five or six years is one thing ; to stay for nine or ten is quite another, especially when the three or four additional years correspond almost exactly with the turbulent period of adolescence and when puberty arrives at an earlier age than in the past. This is not to advocate a case for reducing the duration of compulsory schooling, but simply to stress that the longer it lasts the more its nature changes and the more what seems like the very success of enlightened reformers may turn sour.

Forms of compulsory schooling

The range of forms of compulsory schooling is vast. The national reports prepared by OECD Member countries in connection with this report indicate the remarkable diversity sometimes occurring not only between countries but within individual countries. Compulsory schooling may be continuous or divided into stages. It may start and finish at varying ages. It may be encompassed by an uneven range of legal requirements. The terminology used in one Member country may have fundamentally different connotations in another. In some countries — Denmark and Sweden, for example — "basic" schooling covers nine years in the same type of institution and is coterminous with "compulsory" schooling. This does not preclude sub-dividing basic schooling into distinct stages. In other countries a conceptual and institutional distinction is drawn between primary schooling and secondary schooling, the first cycle of which is compulsory — the Junior High School, for example, in the United States. In this report it is proposed to distinguish between primary schooling (the primary school) and the first cycle of secondary schooling, which will be designated "lower secondary education". Under this distinction primary schooling may last for four, five or even six years according to national practice, and lower secondary schooling for three, four or even more years. The caesura is normally accompagnied by a switch from class teachers to subject teachers, that is, secondary schools are more institutionally differentiated internally. In Germany there are inconsistencies between the *Länder*. For example, the first two years of the first stage of secondary education may be the *Förderstufe* (to further, advance or promote) or the *Orientierungsstufe* (to orientate towards a particular school type or type of education). The third stage of secondary education (11th to 13th years of schooling) is variously named the "college", "superior" or "studies" stage. But there are not only administrative differences, there may also be ideological differences leading to conflicting positions between different countries or groups of countries and even, on occasion, within a single Member country.

Goals and Functions

The social structure, the demography, the economic profile and the very culture of all OECD Member countries have changed, often dramatically, during the past two decades. Nowhere has this change been greater than in the experience offered to and the expectations made of young people. In significant respects the young are obliged to be different from their parents with respect to new skills, attitudes, aspirations and understandings. Compulsory schools have also changed, often fundamentally, in many of their practices and achievements. Some of the changes in the schools have been in response to external stimuli and pressures but others have stemmed from the developing professional concerns and knowledge of the teachers and administrators of the compulsory school system.

It is the aim in the remainder of this chapter, drawing primarily upon the national reports, to identify first the more important goals of compulsory education, second the alterations which have occurred in these goals during recent years and third the accompanying shifts in roles and functions. It must be emphasised that the following list is not exhaustive : no list could be so in face of the variations between Member countries and the dynamic effects of the innovations taking place within them. Nor can it apply in its entirety to all countries, as the national reports make abundantly clear.

Basic education

For all countries a prime purpose of compulsory schooling is to ensure that every child receives at least a basic education which, in general terms, may be defined as the minimum necessary preparation for adult role and status. Much confusion exists over the distinction between basic education and compulsory education. Compulsory education is perhaps the easier term to define in that it has a precise legal nature ; it is the span of years during which every normal child must be receiving a formal education. Yet the considerations which lead a society to determine and modify the timing and duration of schooling are very closely linked with the concept of basic education. Command of more and more areas of knowledge, skills and insights has come to be required of the young as a prelude to their entry to adulthood ; so too has it become necessary to lengthen the period of compulsory schooling to contain them all. In short, *compulsory education is the period during which it is hoped that basic education will have been achieved.*

Yet although there is a substantial overlap between compulsory and basic education, they are far from being the same thing. Even within a single school system there may be many patterns of basic education. The context in which it occurs — ethnic, cultural and regional — often has an undeniable effect on its content. In many contexts basic education for boys is seen to be fundamentally different from that for girls. In others — an increasing number — the differences are far fewer. Many children will go beyond basic performance in their period of compulsory schooling and achieve a level of attainment that can in no way be defined as just basic. Conversely, many children, through their own shortcomings or those of the social system or even those of the school, may perform less well. In some cases they may leave education before reaching the age corresponding to the end of compulsory schooling or immediately when they reach this age or fail to achieve a level regarded as sufficient to enter "full" adult life (defined in such terms as regular employment, adequate wages, legal status as a parent, consumer and worker, etc) [see Table 1].

The subject under consideration in this report is therefore the firm framework of compulsory schooling. But from our examination of this framework we shall also be able to place the achievements and problems of basic education in a meaningful context.

Equality of opportunity through positive discrimination

Perhaps the most important new approach in recent years has concerned an attempt to ensure that no child shall receive an inferior compulsory education, by creating a genuinely open system rather than one in which some children are more favoured than others. In other words, from a situation in which an abstract "equality of opportunity" was seen to be a sufficient goal, we have moved to one in which "unequal" children are actively helped to become equal. Non-intervention has given way to positive discrimination. In particular, attempts are made to assist children who, because of their race, sex, background or environment, have a special difficulty in becoming integrated into schools and society and sharing on equal terms its opportunities. In striving to achieve this goal, school systems commonly endeavour to make good shortcomings in the world of family, community and workplace. Some of the major structural reforms and experiments with compulsory education in recent years have been made partially in response to its adoption of this new goal ; these include comprehensive education, the adoption of innovative curricula, new examination arrangements, mixed ability teaching and projects such as Head Start in the United States, Educational Priority in Great Britain, and their more sophisticated successors attempting to develop both cognitive and affective capacities. In pursuing genuine equality of opportunity, modern compulsory education is faced with a crucial and demanding task that has increasingly come to dominate the performance of its day-to-day activities throughout the OECD countries.

An important component of positive discrimination in most school systems is the attempt to ensure that all young people learn to experience success in at least some aspects of their period of schooling. All too often, however, this has been proved to be easier to say than to achieve, and too many children have completed their compulsory schooling with incomplete or only slight success. Often this has not seemed to be too great a tragedy : we have seen it as axiomatic that not all children can succeed and even believed that the social system needed "failures" to perform the menial tasks, that is, young adults who did not feel entitled, by educational achievement, to the more interesting and better paid jobs. Moreover, in times of full employment, failure in school was not necessarily seen as failure in life by the less successful individual, for he could still establish a place in society. In recent years, however, this passive response to school failure has changed as our conception of both human needs and the labour market has changed. This has led to a new series of goals that are specifically concerned with finding ways not only to understand failure but also to devise a range of support strategies that will compensate for its causes, alleviate it and ultimately overcome it.

Promoting social change and social stability

Without schools, the new knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivations essential to bring about and to implement technological, vocational and economic change can be learned only slowly, if at all, by the majority of people. With a compulsory school system, new knowledge can reach the young directly ; without it, it can only reach them indirectly and informally through the existing adult population, the majority of whom by necessity are committed to lifestyles based upon the old knowledge. Without the skills of literacy made widespread by the compulsory schools, the effectiveness of the mass media as instruments of change would also be greatly diminished.

But almost paradoxically the schools are also a vital force in the equally important task of maintaining social stability, reinforcing the family and other institutions. Traditionally, they have been agents of cultural homogenisation or, as

Table 1. **Destination of pupils at given ages**

Year t	Situation at t+1			
	AUSTRALIA			
	Total in education		Total outside education	
	B	G	B	G
1972 - 13 and 14	82.5	80.7	17.5	19.3
15 years	67.6	64.5	32.4	35.5
16 years	56.0	54.2	44.0	45.8
1976 - 13 and 14	86.8	87.2	13.2	12.8
15 years	64.5	69.5	35.5	30.5
16 years	53.7	56.6	46.3	43.4

BELGIUM
Situation at 31st December 1975

	In general secondary education	In vocational/technical education	Total including others	Total outside education
14 years	59.7	33.8	97.0	3.0
15 years	47.9	39.0	90.6	9.4
16 years	40.3	38.2	81.6	18.4

CANADA
Activity of 16 or 17 year-olds (one year older than school leaving age) by highest level of education attained, in 1971

	In general secondary education (full-time)		In vocational/ technical education (part time)		Total including others		Employed		Non-active and unemployed		Total outside education		Distribution of population concerned	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
6 years of studies or less	44.0	43.0	2.3	1.8	46.3	44.8	18.5	12.1	35.3	42.9	53.8	55.0	2.9	2.2
7-9 years of studies	65.0	58.8	3.6	2.9	68.6	61.7	14.6	10.9	16.8	27.4	31.4	38.3	20.5	15.2
10-13 years of studies	90.1	89.4	2.1	1.7	92.2	91.1	3.5	3.0	4.2	5.9	7.7	8.9	72.8	78.5
2nd cycle secondary	78.3	77.6	4.3	4.5	82.6	82.1	9.3	7.9	8.1	10.1	17.4	18.0	4.2	4.0
Total	83.1	83.2	2.5	2.0	85.6	85.2	6.5	4.6	7.9	10.2	14.4	14.8	100	100

DENMARK
Pupils who were in 7th year of basic school in 1968

	Total in education		Employed non-active or unemployed		In apprenticeship		Total outside education	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
15 years	89	93	8	6	2	0	10	6
16 years	84	90	10	9	7	1	17	10
17 years	62	75	14	18	23	7	37	25

FRANCE
Pupils leaving the education system in 1973

	Without certificate		With lower secondary certificate		With vocational certificate		Distribution of population concerned		Employed		Non-active unemployed		In apprenticeship		Military service
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B
15 years	94.2	100.0	—	—	5.8	—	3.9	2.5	28.8	25.0	25.0	62.5	40.6	12.5	5.8
16 years	98.7	85.0	1.3	15.0	—	—	17.5	13.4	33.8	34.6	17.1	44.1	47.9	20.5	1.3
17 years	91.0	91.9	6.0	6.0	3.0	2.1	78.7	84.1	51.9	62.7	9.5	24.8	38.0	12.5	0.6
Total	92.5	91.1	4.9	7.1	2.5	1.8	100.0	100.0	47.8	58.0	11.4	28.3	39.8	13.6	0.9

NETHERLANDS
Percentage of 14 to 17 year-olds among total number of pupils who left full-time education (primary, lower and upper general, and vocational secondary)

	1965		1970		1972		1974		1976	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
14 years	8.6	16.4	3.4	7.5	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	—
15 years	16.1	22.9	10.3	18.2	6.7	17.1	4.8	11.6	0.9	0.7
16 years	18.7	17.4	17.3	18.4	15.6	20.9	13.7	18.7	8.5	15.5
17 years	15.1	12.9	17.5	18.2	17.7	19.5	16.9	21.1	16.5	26.3
Total 14-17 years	58.5	69.6	48.5	62.3	40.7	57.9	35.6	51.5	26.0	42.5

UNITED KINGDOM (England and Wales)
Pupils leaving secondary school

	General secondary and others		University and teacher training		Vocational courses		Total including others		In temporary employment		In employment		Total		Others		Distribution of the population concerned	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
1969 - 15 years	8.0	15.9			0.2	0.4	8.2	16.3	0.1	—	91.7[1]	83.6[1]	91.8	83.6			68.0[2]	67.5[2]
16 years	12.3	19.7	1.3	0.7	0.4	0.8	14.0	21.2	0.6	0.6	85.5[1]	78.1[1]	86.1	78.7			17.2	17.1
17 years	12.6	14.0	34.8	42.0	7.3	3.9	54.7	59.9	2.0	1.2	43.4[1]	38.9[1]	45.4	40.1			14.9	15.4
1971 - 15 years	9.1[3]	18.1[3]					9.1	18.1	0.2	—	80.9	73.8	81.1	73.8	9.7	8.0	67.5[3]	67.4[3]
16 years	13.4[3]	22.4[3]	1.2	0.7			14.6	23.1	1.0	0.8	73.8	67.2	74.8	68.0	10.6	8.9	17.1	16.9
17 years	14.0[3]	16.3[3]	38.8	43.1			52.8	59.4	2.7	2.6	34.5	32.3	37.2	34.9	10.0	5.8	15.4	15.7
1973 - 15 years	5.1	6.5			1.2	8.3	6.3	14.8	—	0.1	82.3	74.5	82.3	74.6	11.3	10.6	53.5	52.9
16 years	5.4	6.2	0.4	0.4	1.6	7.1	7.4	13.7	0.5	0.4	80.5	76.0	81.0	76.4	11.6	9.8	31.7	31.6
17 years	9.1	7.0	37.9	38.7	4.1	7.5	51.1	53.2	3.3	3.1	35.7	36.7	39.0	39.8	10.0	7.0	14.8	15.5
1975 - 15 years	6.7	9.8			1.5	9.0	8.2	18.8	—	—	73.4	62.9	73.4	62.9	18.4	18.3	53.9	53.0
16 years	7.4	8.9	0.4	0.3	1.9	7.9	9.7	17.1	0.4	0.2	71.7	66.0	72.1	66.2	18.2	16.6	31.1	31.4
17 years	10.8	10.4	38.3	32.6	2.7	6.4	51.8	49.4	3.5	2.8	32.8	36.7	36.3	39.3	11.9	11.4	15.0	15.6

1. Including "others".
2. Including vocational courses.
3. 14 and 15 years.

Source: National statistics.

some critics would allege, cultural imperialism. Not only do they transmit new knowledge but they also control its availability and use. In doing so, they have a unique opportunity not only to identify items of lasting value in our cultures, but also to ensure that these remain there by making them available to the young. Without the activities of the schools, it is arguable that many elements of national and regional life lacking direct economic and social utility would not survive outside small minority groups. Such elements include languages, not only Latin and Greek but also Gaelic, Basque, Welsh and other regional tongues ; important aspects of history and literature ; traditional crafts and domestic skills and much in the field of moral and aesthetic education. As an effective but controlled instrument, compulsory schooling has a key role to play in preserving cultural pluralism in our societies.

In the past, decisions on what is the appropriate basic education for children of minority groups have usually been taken by the adults of the majority group. Yet in many Member countries the minority groups have in recent years come to find a "new voice" and have sought to express it in the control of education. Such new voices may have different and conflicting views on social change and equality of opportunity. In particular, they may seek stronger assurance that the schools are actually doing what they say they are doing in implementing these goals. An important contribution to the goal of promoting social change and social stability becomes that of helping the new voices to articulate their concerns and of helping teachers and administrators to understand them and to respond to them.

Preparation for adult life

Compulsory education has always had, as a primary goal, preparation for a full adult life in work, leisure, family and community. But in many countries, for historical reasons and naturally enough, compulsory education first came to be associated most strongly with preparation for work. In a majority of Member countries the full achievement of compulsory education occurred during the development of industrialisation, although in the twentieth century many countries have introduced compulsory schooling in anticipation of an industrialised society. Industrialisation required new work skills — particularly those of numeracy and literacy — which it became essential for all rather than few to master. Employers called for an increasing number of recruits to the labour force who did not have to begin their basic education after employment had commenced. In so doing they showed that control of basic education was not only in the hands of church and state ; powerful groups such as industrialists were also able to express a voice on the subject. But not only did "society" need more fully educated manpower ; individuals too needed to master new skills in order to achieve a satisfying and responsible occupational role. Schools and teachers were the only instruments for making these skills widely available. Schooling for all rather than the few became essential and gradually lengthened as the range of skills and knowledge considered to be required for adult life became ever more extended.

Yet compulsory schooling never limits its goals merely to preparing children fully for working life. Indeed, there have been many moves to reduce the direct link between schooling and work and to emphasise preparation for other aspects of living. Sometimes attempts have been made to emulate forms of elite schooling which are believed, often mistakenly, to prepare children for a life of culture and leisure or for certain forms of work highly esteemed by the education profession rather than for work. But recently opinion has changed and the importance of helping young people to achieve a meaningful and realistic vocational identity in basic education is now generally accepted. The change has obvious links with contemporary economic difficulties and widespread unemployment.

Compulsory education has always served even wider functions developing the skills required in family and community life ; leisure and recreation are also of equal importance and at the same time interrelated with occupational skills. In the settled pre-industrial world, the young came to learn imperceptibly but effectively the agreed rules of communities and the privileges and sanctions that maintained them. In the new settlements and, indeed, new countries brought into being by industrially-induced geographical mobility and migration, few such rules of social living existed. Instead, there was *anomie* and, not infrequently, disrespect for privacy, leisure, property, law, the church and even life itself. As Durkheim, writing in Paris at the turn of the century, noted, it had become a function of the new compulsory education to bring about the "internalisation" of the new rules of modern societies such as the rule of law and the concept of nationhood that provided the essential basis for life therein, the maintenance of democracy and respect for the individual. In modern societies such internalisation of "desirable traits" became a function fulfilled by the schools in collaboration with the family, the church and the nation at large. To take one of many countries formally advocating the teaching of ethical behaviour, the Netherlands authorities emphasise that in section 27, sub-section 1 of the 1977 Education Bill, which applies exclusively to the public sector : "The education provided in public schools shall contribute to the development of pupils by devoting attention to the diversity of ethical principles and social values which exist in Dutch society".

One of the notable changes in recent years is that such preparation for work and leisure is now, for many children, one that is no longer applicable to one specific and largely predictable life style but to a far wider range of adult roles. Goals are increasingly expressed not so much in terms of helping young people aim at a specific job, trade or profession, but in terms of helping them to become adaptable to the changing conditions of economic and social life. Emphasis is placed upon problem solving, flexibility, initiative and other qualities which will enable the young person to respond better to an unknown future, not only in work but also in family, community and leisure. Goals such as these are, of course, much easier to state than to translate into practice. Concern for adaptability is reflected, for instance, in the objectives of the French authorities :

> "The education of a young person and his culture are not necessarily linked with the content of curricula and time-tables ; the essential factor for this citizen of the year 2000 lies in his adaptability and his powers of observation and judgement".

In part, for many young people, this adaptability means the ability to live with conflict and uncertainty at a local, national and international level, and to decide between the apparently divergent demands of the economic system, labour relationships, community and family obligations. Now an important function of compulsory schooling is to help young people to acquire the moral and intellectual equipment to make judgements and the political sophistication to implement them. In its fullest form, such a goal requires not that the school train the young but rather that it help the young prepare themselves for adult life — and adult life different from life as it can be apprehended at the school. The goal becomes part of a far more fundamental aim — balancing social innovation against social stability.

Motivation for continuing education

Closely associated with the above mentioned goals is the additional objective of continuing education after compulsory schooling. This involves giving all pupils a sufficient taste and propensity for learning to enable them to return to wide-ranging educational activities throughout their life, not only for vocational or economic

purposes but also for enjoyment and recreation. Preparation for recurrent or *permanent* education has, in recent years, become an important goal of most education systems. The changing nature of society makes it essential for most adults to augment existing knowledge and skills or to learn new ones not only in work, but also in home maintenance and child care and even in leisure. In the past continuing education has been a minority, often elitist, activity. For some, compulsory schooling evoked no enthusiasm for more education : on the contrary it aroused a powerful desire to terminate it. The new methodology, curriculum and relationships of modern compulsory schooling offer the prospect of a reversal : the rising numbers of "early and late school leavers" who are returning to study in tertiary institutions in a few Member countries, for example Sweden, suggest the prospect is capable of realisation.

Recurrent education is, however, a far broader concept than attendance at an educational institution, provided that those with limited initial education participate in large numbers. It embraces lifelong patterns of self-education. One such pattern now initiated in many compulsory schools is to assist individuals to respond perceptively and wisely to the pressures of the media, notably television. In helping the young to resist the distorting powers of advertising, to question the examples of adults portrayed both in drama and documentary, the compulsory schools exercise a major social function.

Choosing adult roles

Another long-standing goal of compulsory education has been to help young people to identify and choose their role in adult life. In the past, the decision about a young person's "station in life" was often determined by his family background. But increasingly in modern societies, as the American sociologist Talcot Parsons (1959) has noted, "ascription" gives way to "achievement" ; the young person may choose the adult role he desires and attempt to match himself to its requirements. Compulsory education has assumed a major function in modern societies in helping the young to find their identity and to reach the appropriate levels required for entry. These attempts to help young people to discover their aptitudes, interests and potentiality are struggling to overtake traditional emphases on examination and accreditation. For examinations remain in most countries an inescapable component of compulsory education. As Bowles and Gintis (1977) and many other writers remind us, they ensure that children are prepared and "accredited" for adult roles in society. In so doing they constitute on of the most important control mechanisms of compulsory education ; the personnel who operate the examination system hold some of the key power positions in education systems. They can also lead ineluctably to the perpetuation of social stratification. On the other hand, it can also be argued that examinations and accreditation are prerequisites for a shift from ascription to achievement as the criterion for allocating roles.

School as an end in itself

Finally, it is important not to overlook one of the most fundamental yet simple goals of compulsory schooling — that schooling itself should be worthwhile not only in a future but also in a present context. Pioneers of pedagogy such as Dewey, Montessori and many others have long recognised this but all too often it has been forgotten. Yet the full achievement of all the goals we have mentioned, especially those newly arising, is only possible if the young are satisfied and happy in their present experience. This does not necessarily mean that there should be a sense of diffuse well-being among all the children in a school. The ancient Greek ideal of education for the development of the mind also has its contemporary advocates,

who seek to identify intrinsically worthwhile activities. What is intrinsically worthwhile may not always connote cheerful faces in the classroom.

Perhaps the development of a more active pupil participation in the running of compulsory schools may in future make it more obvious when "worthwhile" conditions do not obtain and also provide a more effective way of rectifying matters. In some countries attempts to bring about such participation are already being made. In Denmark the pupils have a right, but not a duty, to set up a pupils' council at the school, and in some instances a joint pupils' council for the schools in the municipality. These issues are of such importance that they form a major component of a subsequent chapter on children's perceptions of compulsory schooling.

Other goals and functions

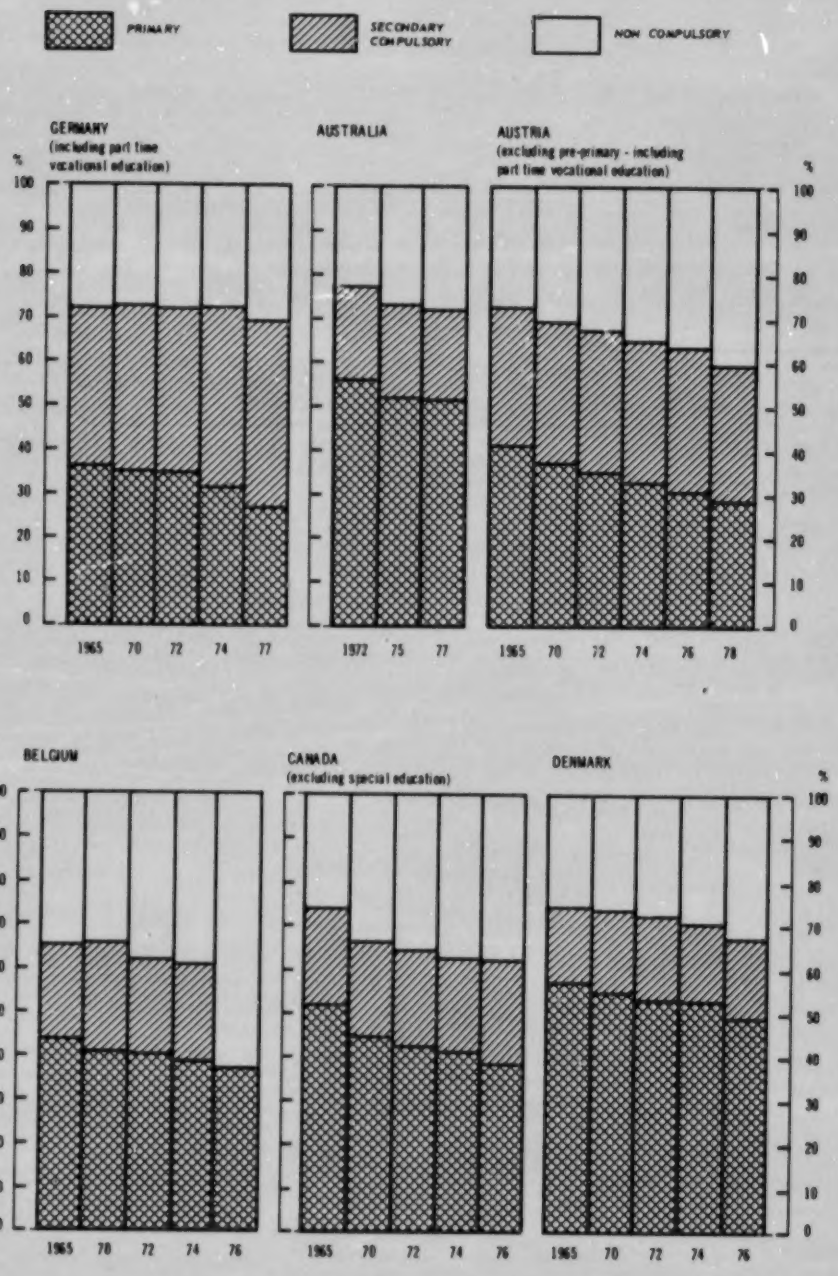
In addition to these specific areas in which changes of goal are clearly to be seen, there are many less visible but equally important changes in the goals and functions of the schools. It is not difficult to discern changes in the range of moral values concerning the political and social order and in the conception of human achievement and aspiration appropriate to the modern world. New topics with important moral connotations have come to feature in the curriculum of compulsory schooling in recent years such as relationships of class, sex, race and labour ; conservation, pollution ; the use of natural resources : topics that were seldom considered fully, if at all, in the compulsory education of the recent past. In short, schools are sometimes being used to promote changes in attitudes and values which are desired by public policy or even reflected in legislation. For example, moral values and attitudes towards the handicapped in society are an important ingredient of the curriculum in many schools as a result of public integration policies.

Conclusion

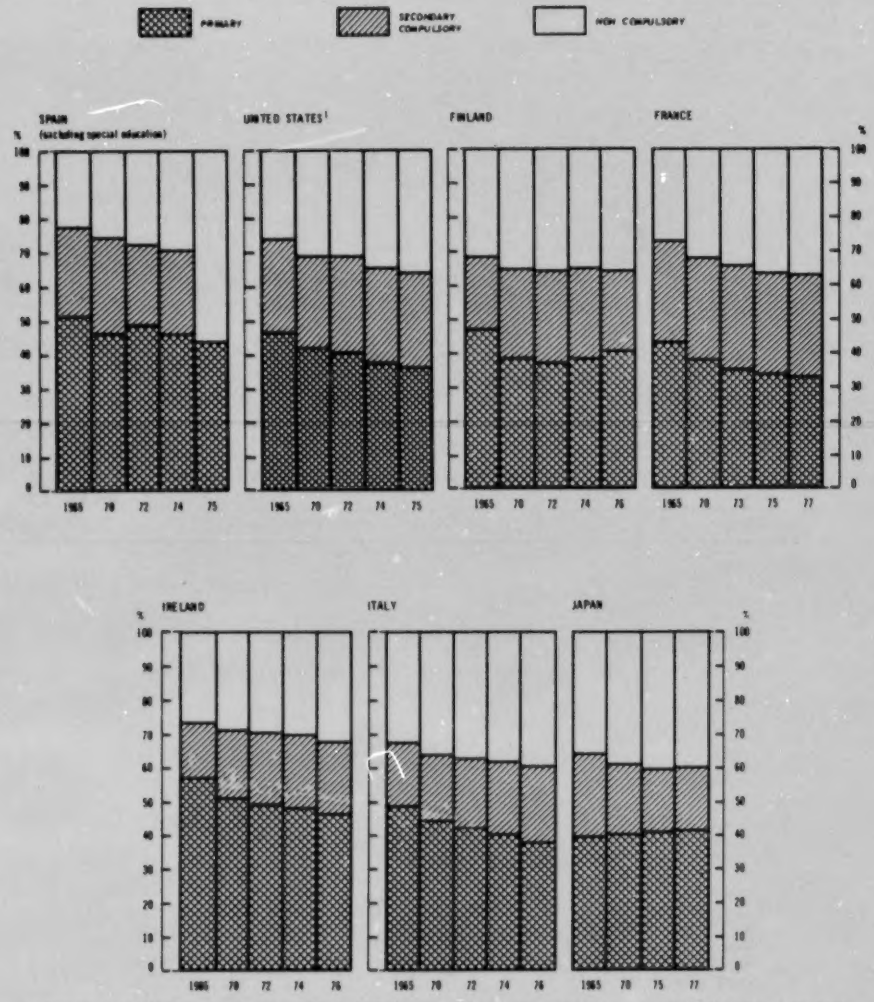
Throughout this chapter, with its identification of some of the changing goals and functions of compulsory schooling, we have shown that although this is the solid, stable and mainstream component of our education systems (see Graph I) it is also undergoing metamorphosis. Almost every national report speaks not only of tradition and established practice but also of experiment, renewal and development. Compulsory education is obliged to respond to occupational, demographic and cultural change and to do so in full view and with the cognizance of a public of which every member has lengthy personal experience — and personal opinions — of school. Here we have the underlying explanation not only for the changing goals of basic education but also for the changes in control and accountability. These are the features of compulsory education that make the considerations to be explored in this report necessary — considerations that will help to ensure that the decisions of administrators and teachers on curriculum, methodology, resources (financial and otherwise), assessment, professional training and communication, will be based upon fuller information, will be more justifiable and, above all, responsive to the interests of its students who constitute all our future — in short, will conform to the appropriate conditions for the exercise of power and control in a modern democratic society.

Graph 1

ENROLMENTS IN COMPULSORY SCHOOLING AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL FULL TIME ENROLMENTS

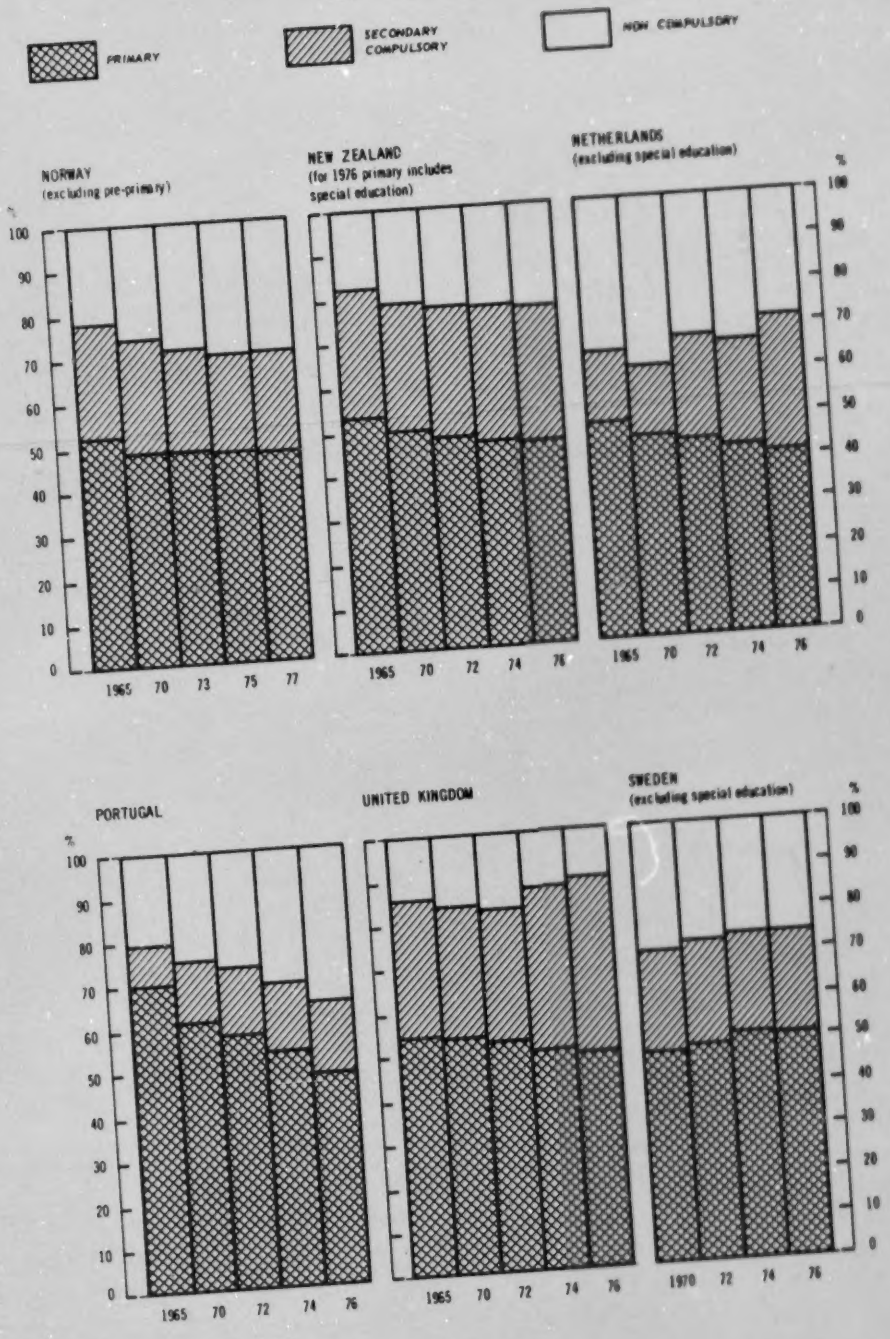


Graph 1 (cont.)



1. Statistics for the United States have been compiled by the OECD Secretariat and were neither confirmed nor approved by the United States. The OECD Secretariat therefore accepts all responsibility in the release of these statistics.

Graph 1 (cont.)



Source : National statistics.

II

COMMON OR DIFFERENTIATED SCHOOLS

Diversity of Compulsory Schooling

Like any complex social institution that has to be considered within a cross-cultural framework compulsory schooling assumes a variety of structural and organizational forms and is therefore difficult to map. For the sake of simplicity it is proposed to view it in four dimensions. First, it may be broken up into two or more distinct stages, each responding to the changing needs of children as they pass through the development cycle. Second, each stage may be represented by different types of school organized internally in different ways and offering different curricula. Third, a school may have a very large or very small number of pupils and a wide or narrow teacher/pupil ratio. Fourth, the duration of classes, schooldays and the school year may vary considerably from one education system to another.

How schools should be structured and internally organized has become a running controversy in recent times as governments and education specialists, teachers and parents have disputed the merits and demerits of every proposed solution, their arguments and counter-arguments necessarily reflecting their varying concepts of efficiency, equality and happiness. In succeeding chapters it is intended to discuss the major structural and organisational issues that have arisen.

School Models

Is there an ideal model of a compulsory school or can several models coexist with equal effectiveness ? The great majority of OECD countries have by now created a *common primary* school covering the first four to six years of schooling. A majority of countries have also created a *common lower secondary school,* if not for all then for most children. A few countries, indeed, have established an *all-age common school* to comprehend the whole of compulsory schooling, but, by and large, primary and secondary pupils are not accommodated in the same school building. A significant minority of countries have retained *selective schools,* especially from the beginning of the lower secondary cycle. Some countries maintain parallel systems. It might thus be inferred that there is a clear-cut split among and within OECD countries over whether or not to offer common compulsory schooling for all. In practice, however, there exists the more fundamental crux as to how much differentiation there is *within* schools and at what age it begins. For so-called common schools can vary enormously in the way they distribute pupils in groups and classes and apply the curriculum.

Moreover, there is the question in all countries of how far parents should have the right to choose which public school to send their children to or to opt out of the public system altogether. If they do opt out, what are their rights to public subventions and what are their legal obligations ?

Spread of the Common School

The spread of the common school at the compulsory level has been a remarkable feature of educational change in many OECD countries since the Second World War. Mainly impelled by a powerful egalitarian movement, it has also been encouraged by cost and efficiency factors. Parallel forms of school, with early selection to academic secondary education, have increasingly been replaced by an articulated system of stages within the range of primary and secondary education. Similarly, within schools organised on comprehensive lines, there has been a trend away from early differentiation of pupils into distinct "academic" and "non-academic" curriculum alternatives towards an extension of mixed ability teaching. But there are great differences among countries in how long ago compulsory education was reorganised along comprehensive lines and how far the present system accords with a radical interpretation of the principle of comprehensive education.

In pursuit of the egalitarian ideal of a common school, the United States pioneered the development of an ends-on system of elementary schools and comprehensive secondary schools as early as the latter half of the nineteenth century. As the comprehensive high schools developed in the twentieth century, their curricula gave great scope for optional courses in pursuit of another cherished ideal — individual choice.

In Western Europe, Norway led the way by establishing in 1920 a common school up to the age of 14 (at that time the end of compulsory schooling) with the same curriculum for all pupils, except that rural and urban schools adopted different versions, with no grouping of pupils according to ability, and stressing the principle of the automatic promotion of pupils from lower to higher grades. Thus, the idea of a common school and a common curriculum is a long-established principle in Norwegian education and has in recent decades strongly influenced policies for education up to the age of 19.

Elsewhere in Western Europe, the abolition of parallel select and non-select types of school within the sector of compulsory education gathered momentum in the post-war decades, with Sweden making schools comprehensive up to the age of 16 during the 1950s and 1960s, followed closely by Norway, which similarly extended the common school and raised the school-leaving age to 16. Other countries have made or have started to make the move more recently. Thus, France has recently completed comprehensive reorganisation of lower secondary schools, first supplanting previously separate institutions by the *collège d'enseignement secondaire,* which since the Haby reforms of the last few years has been renamed *le collège* or *le collège unique,* replacing the distinctive sections or *filières* of the CES with a broad common curriculum, officially to be taught in fully mixed ability classes and supplemented by a system of optional subjects.

In the United Kingdom, the reorganisation of secondary education along comprehensive lines is now widespread, although under the present government the pressure for full implementation has relaxed. Compared to the longer-established comprehensive schools in Scandinavia, the French and British schools have a wider range of curricular options in the final years of compulsory schooling and use ability grouping by selection more extensively. In Belgium, where secondary schools are in the process of "initial" comprehensive reorganisation, the present curriculum structure resembles in many ways the French pattern before the most recent Haby reform : at the beginning of secondary school pupils enter either the more "academic" section A or the less academic section B which leads to vocational training, and the curricular differences between the sections become more pronounced with each year of secondary schooling.

In some other OECD countries, for example Germany and Austria, a definite policy commitment to comprehensive organization for the full period of compulsory education has yet to be made, though measures have been taken to make selection more humane, less definitive and better grounded in a more thorough assessment of each pupil's potential. Attempts are also made to co-ordinate curriculum content in the different types of school in order to facilitate transfers for pupils. In Spain, the previously diverse types of school for children aged from 6 to 13 have recently been unified into a single type : the BGE centre (Basic General Education centre) with a unified curriculum guide for all schools (see Graph II).

Frontiers of Controversy

Because of the differences between countries in the extent to which comprehensive education and a common curriculum for all pupils have been implemented, the frontiers of controversy vary among countries. There are international contrasts between what are tacitly assumed to be a viable curriculum and what remains sharply controversial in the public debate on education. For example, in Scandinavia there are not only comprehensive schools but also mixed-ability teaching in most subjects and only restricted scope for curriculum alternatives.

The problem of the equitable distribution of pupils among different streams, sections or preparatory examination courses becomes less acute when pupils and parents may choose freely from a very limited number of existing options. What remains controversial is not selection for different ability groups, but the vestiges of ability grouping based on *self-selection* in certain key academic subjects such as mathematics and foreign languages. So far, only Norway has opted to implement fully mixed-ability teaching in these subjects, a policy decision that has evoked great controversy. Furthermore, what generates controversy in Scandinavia is not whether there should be a unified examination system at the end of compulsory education but whether formal assessment by means of marking should be totally abolished. In Denmark :

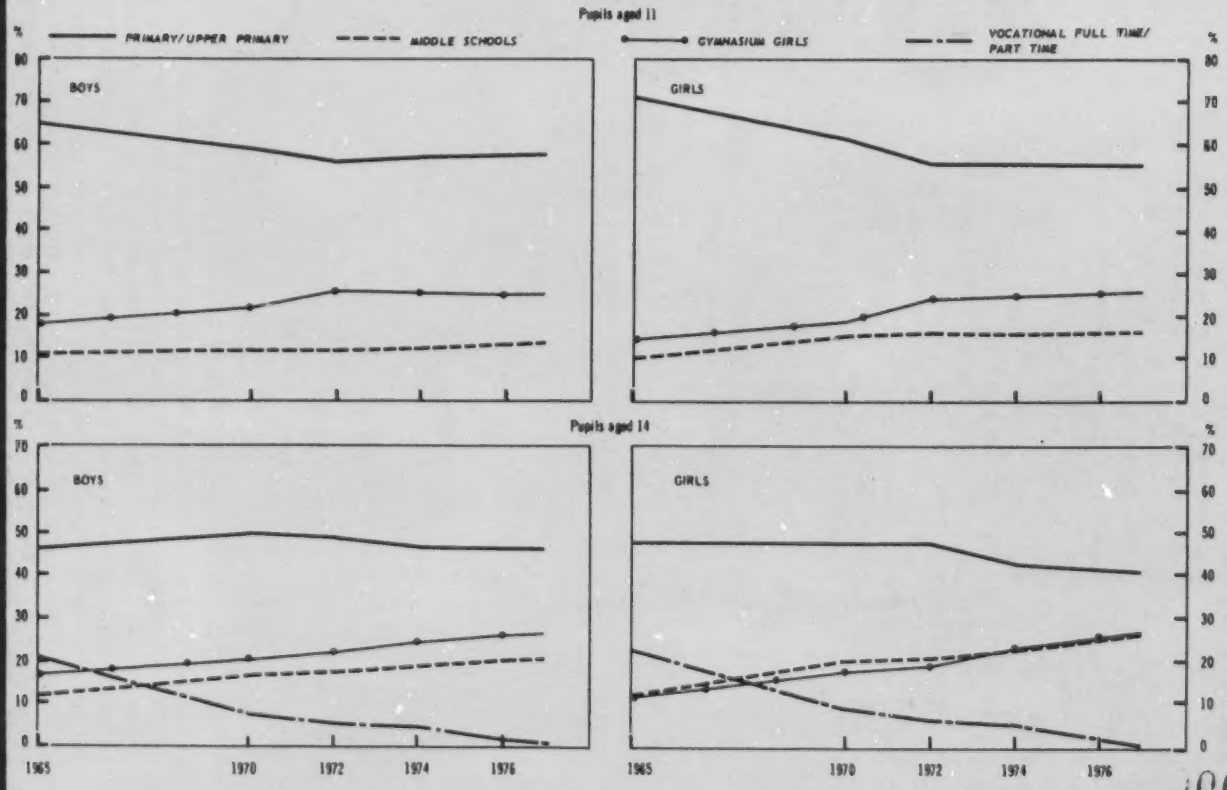
> "if one were to venture — without verification and statistics — to come forward with an account of the questions raised, these would be : 1. Whether the unified school system offers pupils — the quicker and the slower ones, the highly interested and the less interested pupils alike — the same learning potential as in separated forms ? 2. Whether the amount of teaching may have been reduced too much, given, for instance, that Danish and Writing were allocated 2136 full hours by the clock from the first to the seventh form in 1960 whereas 1800 full hours by the clock were allocated for Danish and Writing from the first to the ninth form altogether in 1976 ? 3. Whether the substance taught is essential ? 4. Whether the children get on well with one other in school ?"

By contrast, current controversies in the United Kingdom centre on such issues as how to define a common core of curricular requirements for all pupils and how far the examination system at the end of lower secondary education should be simplified. At present, curricula in England and Wales become strongly differentiated from age 14 to 16, mirroring the fact that some pupils will prepare for the more academic Ordinary Level exams in individual subjects for the General Certificate of Secondary Education and still others will prepare for no formal examination at all. The question of ability grouping is also controversial in Britain, but the debate centres on the merits of streaming practices more extreme even than those which were abandoned already in the early "experimental" stage of the Scandinavian comprehensive schools. Moreover, the idea that pupils should have a

Graph II

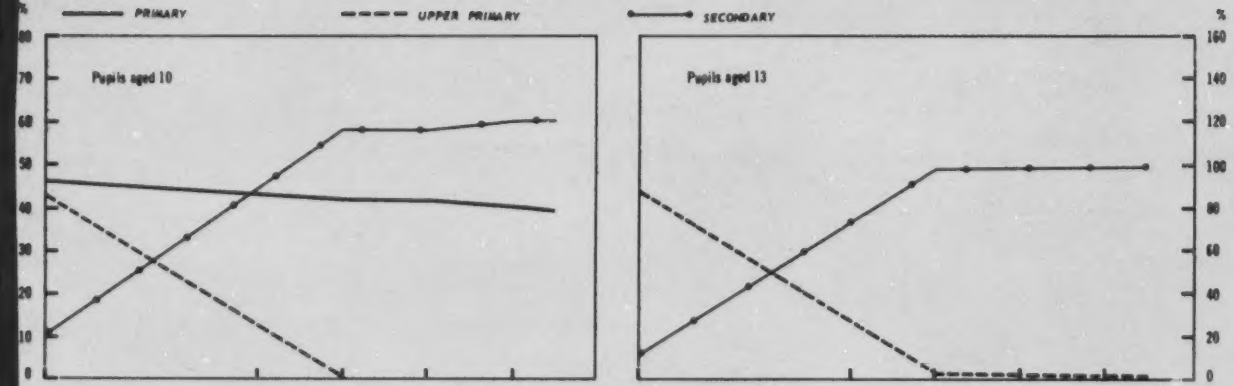
DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF EDUCATION AT VARIOUS STAGES OF THEIR SCHOOLING

GERMANY



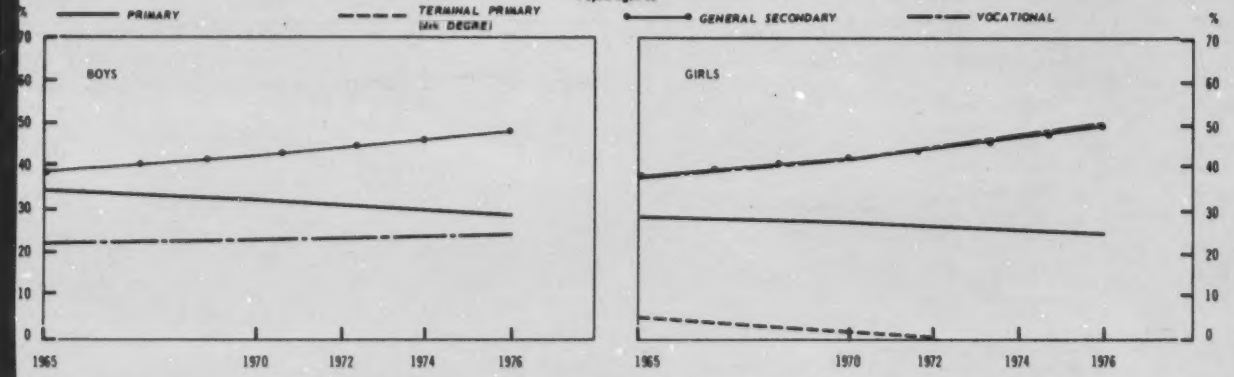
Graph II (cont.)

AUSTRIA



BELGIUM

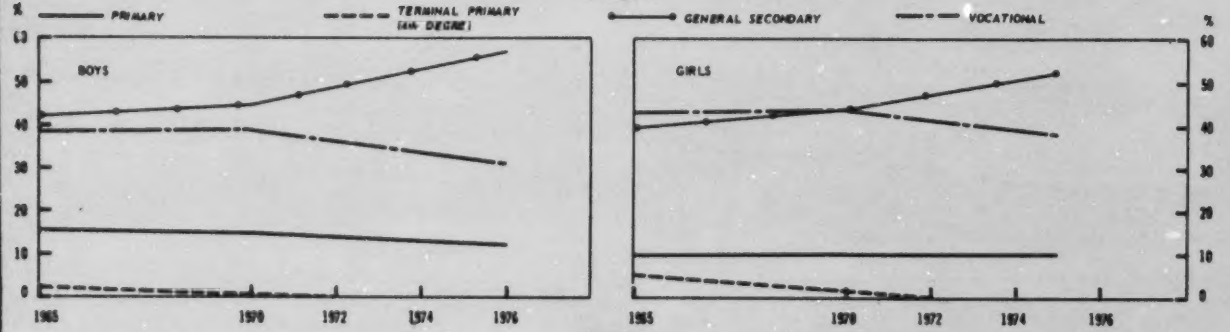
Pupils aged 12



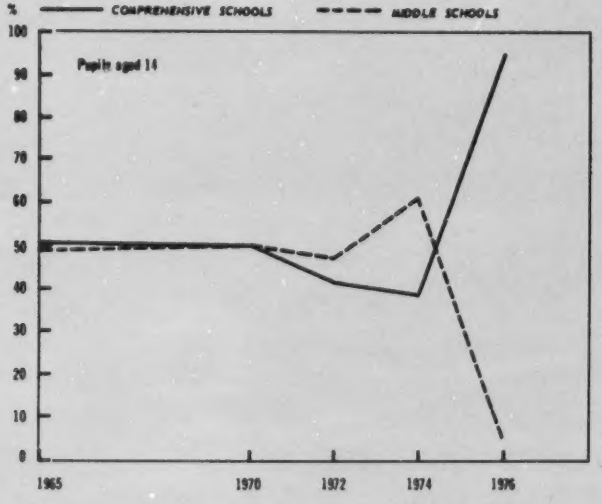
Graph II (cont.)

BELGIUM

Pupils aged 13



DENMARK



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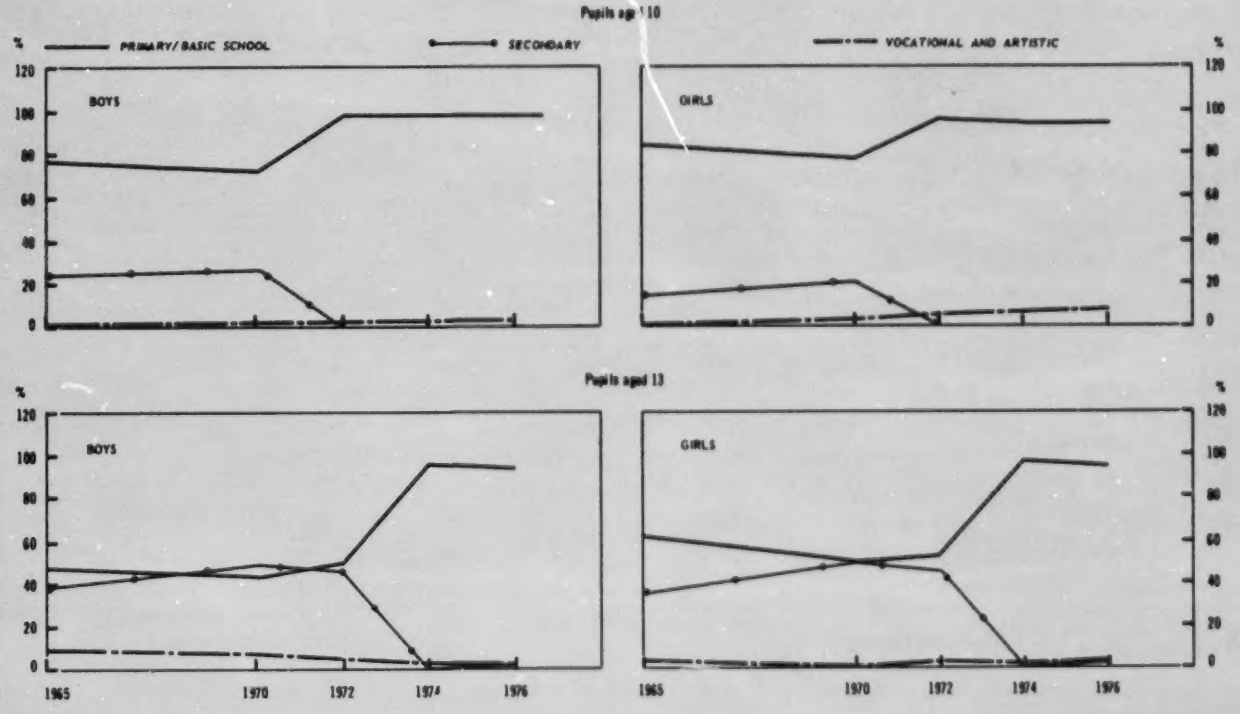

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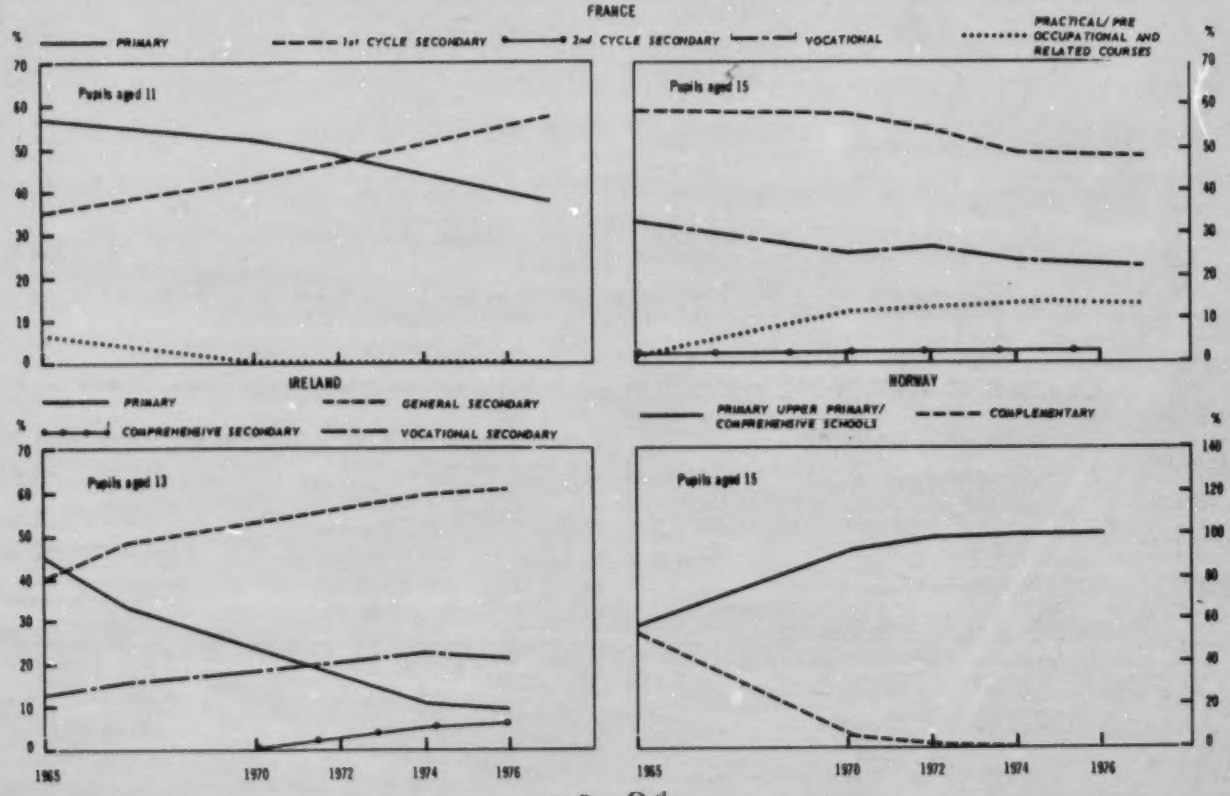
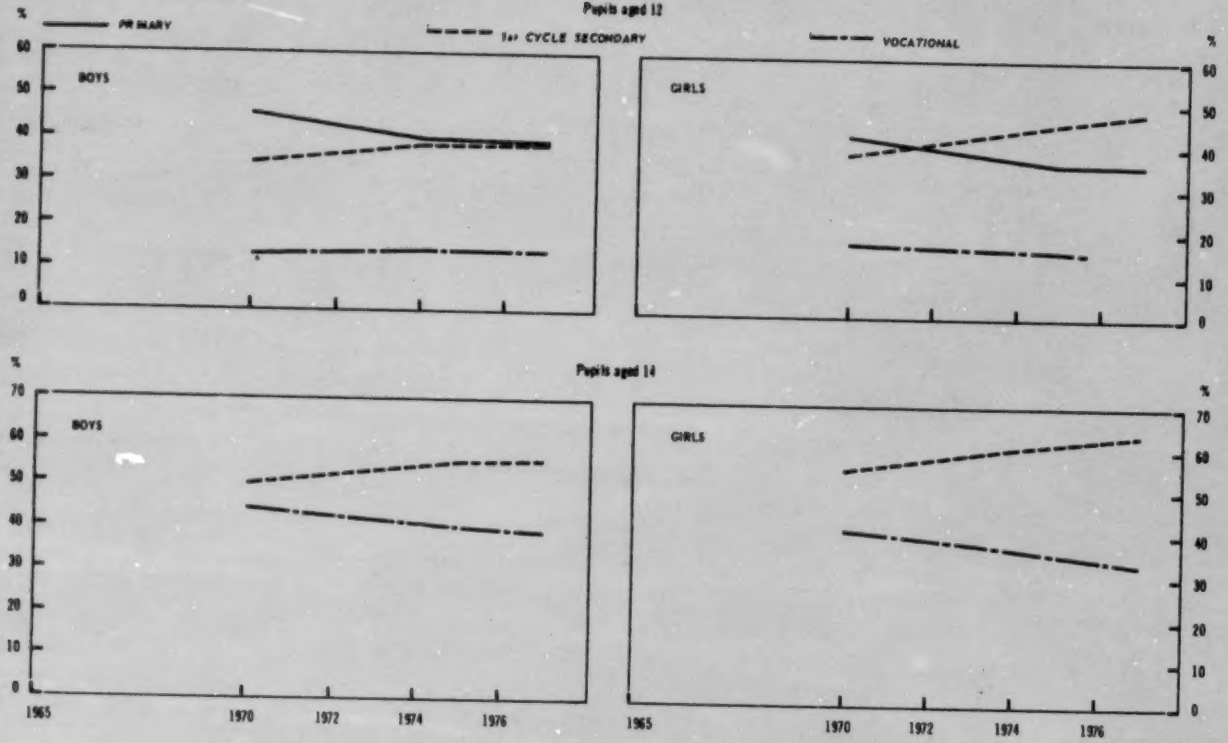


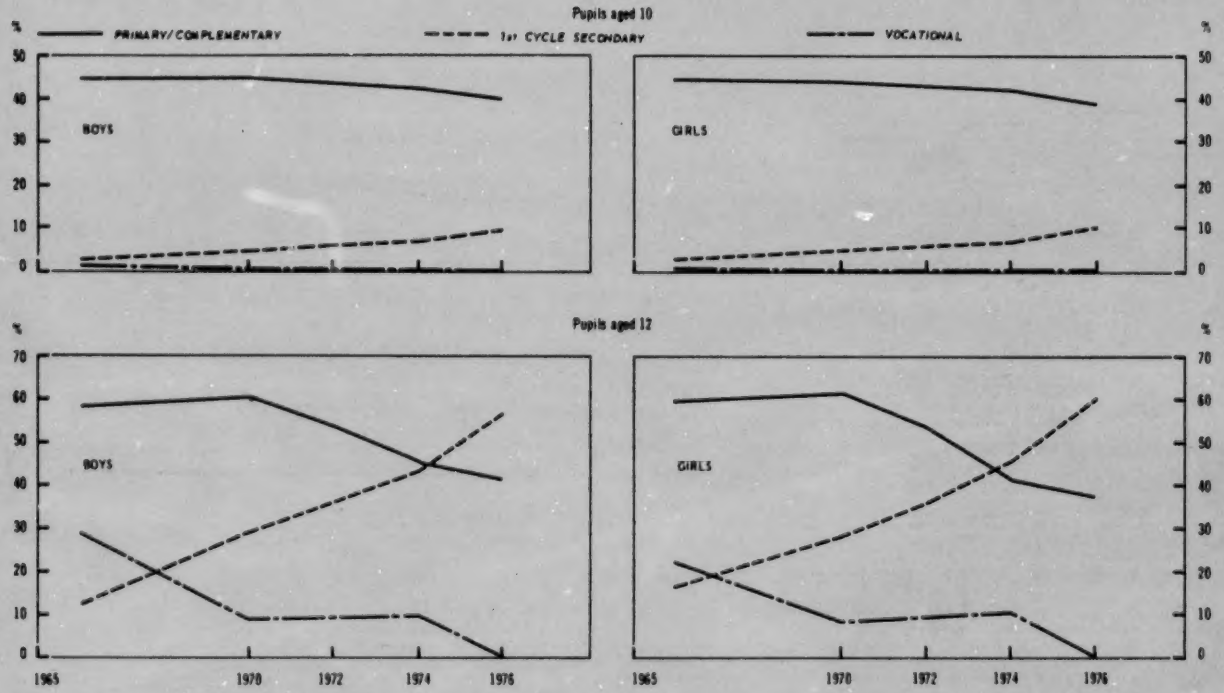
Graph II (cont.)

NETHERLANDS



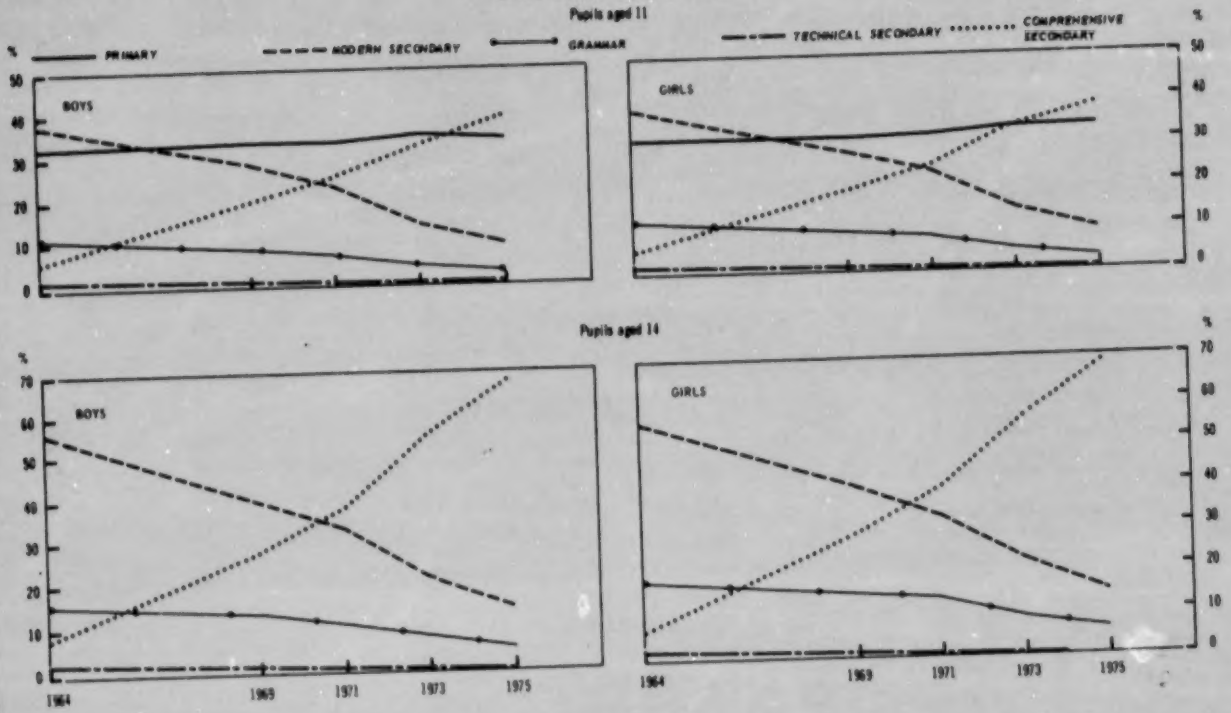
Graph II (cont.)

PORTUGAL



Graph II (cont.)

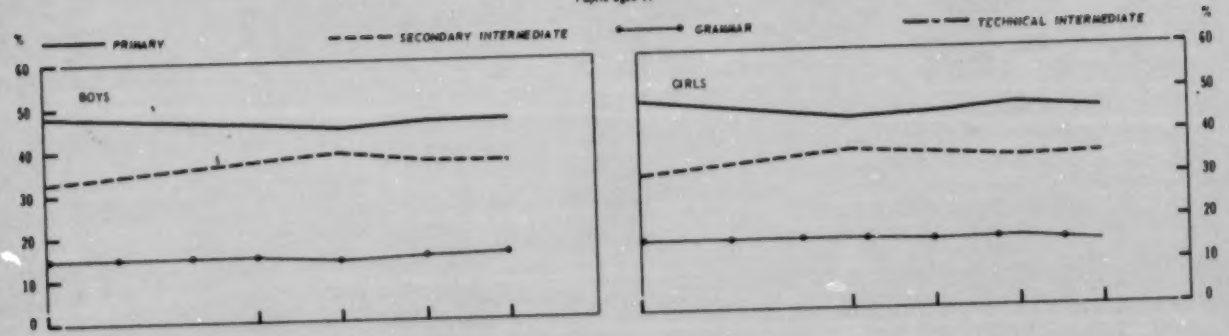
UNITED KINGDOM (England and Wales)



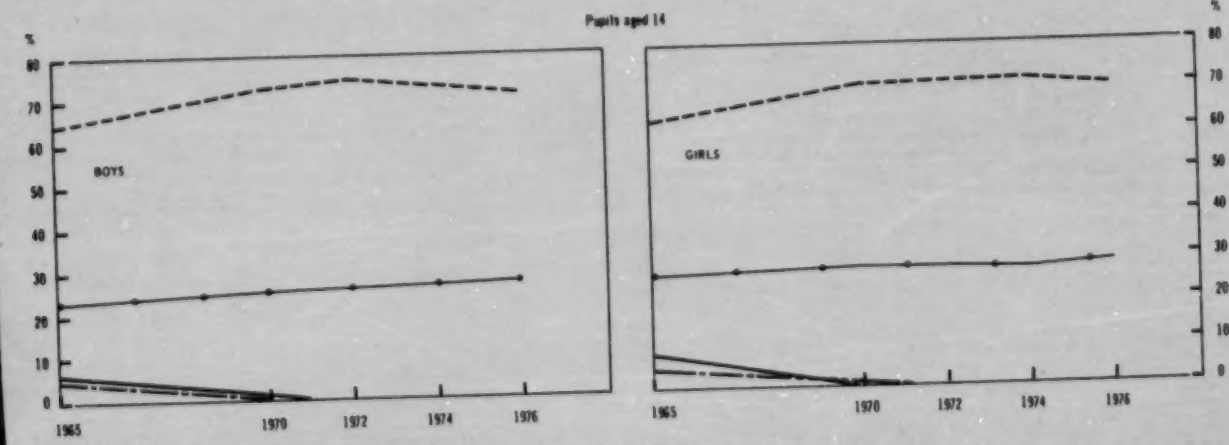
Graph II (cont.)

UNITED KINGDOM (Northern Ireland)

Pupils aged 11



Pupils aged 14



Source : National statistics.

free choice of courses with levels of difficulty on a rising scale is usually considered unrealistic even when such courses are provided.

In France, controversy has focused on the Haby reforms — notably on the merits of abolishing different types of school. The differentiated system focused attention on the criteria used for selection. Abolishing selection raises the question of what the curriculum objectives common to all pupils should be in the newly extended *tronc commun*, as exemplified by the French Ministry of Education (1977) in the official publication *The Knowledge and Abilities Acquired through Compulsory Schooling*. In Germany, where in most Länder there is selection from the common school at the age of 10 and over, for *Hauptschulen, Realschulen* and *Gymnasien*, there is a public debate on the questions of curriculum co-ordination between the distinct types of school, the merits of early selection and the validity of the criteria used. Above all, the question of comprehensive schooling itself remains sharply controversial and highly political.

It must be emphasised that these examples from a limited number of European OECD countries are not intended to give countries a rank according to an international scale of "progressive" or "enlightened" policies. There are within each of these countries sharp divergences of opinion among well-informed persons about what is genuinely "progressive" in improving the schools and what is not, about whether movements towards comprehensive schools and mixed-ability teaching are inevitable and permanent. Rather the examples are meant to illustrate that certain controversial structural issues are closely related to the extent to which lower secondary education has been reorganised along comprehensive lines. The nature of structural debate — about what is tacitly assumed to be educationally feasible, what is sharply controversial, and what is not even yet seriously considered — is determined by the extent to which the principle of a common school has been implemented from one country to another.

The contrast within Europe between slower change in Britain, France, and Germany and faster change in Scandinavia is not surprising. The British, French, and German academic secondary schools — unlike their Scandinavian counterparts — have gained added prestige by serving as historically influential models for schools in other countries. Reforms at their expense have thereby been made more difficult. The advance of the common school has everywhere been associated with the advent to power of broadly based, egalitarian political parties. Such parties have been for some time more dominant in the Scandinavian countries than elsewhere in Western Europe. In addition, recruitment to political leadership has in Scandinavia been unusual in that the educational background of most parliamentarians has typically not included academic secondary schooling, so that the political and educational élites have overlapped far less than in other Western European countries and the political defences of select secondary schools have thereby been weakened. Latin and Greek have for some time been of lesser importance in the academic secondary curricula in Scandinavia than in most other Western European countries. In Norway, the study of classics was nearly banished from secondary education for a period around the turn of the century. The weakening of the classics has eased the extension of a common curriculum since the early induction required for traditionally adequate mastery of classical languages has been an important obstacle to the advance of the common school in many countries.

Between the countries there are also historical differences in cultural values which tend to be reflected in educational policy. For example, it is to be expected that egalitarianism will favour the advance of a common school whereas élitism will be more consistent with early selection and parallel types of school. Then there is the individual-collective contrast. It is to be expected that individualism will be associated with curricula stressing variety, choice, and competition whereas collectivism will tend towards a uniform curriculum for all pupils in a given type of

school and emphasis on collective achievement. The rise of the common school reflects a secular trend favouring egalitarian values and an erosion of the legitimacy of directly inherited élite status. But the extent to which the curriculum of the common school (or of separate, parallel types of school) will stress variety and choice reflects the strength of individualistic values. The individualistic emphasis is especially pronounced in the United States where it is combined with egalitarianism in the concept of "equality of educational opportunity", e.g. equal opportunity to make use of education for social mobility purposes. It is also reflected in the variety of curricular alternatives available in each school. It is not unusual for a medium-sized comprehensive high school to offer 200 or more different courses.

Some recently established European comprehensive system schools practise great curricular differentiation. For example, in the third year of Belgian lower secondary school (age 14), about 56 per cent of the timetable is devoted to a common core of subjects studied by all pupils but at the age of 16 only 25 per cent is devoted to common core subjects. This reflects the views of the Belgian authorities : although there are serious grounds for regarding secondary education at the start as a uniform education for all, it would be unwise to try to standardize it entirely and not to take account of the differences currently prevailing in teaching methods and in the community at large. By way of contrast, in the more collectivist Scandinavian countries, the common core of the curriculum for pupils aged 13 to 16 covers between 86 and 82 per cent of the timetable, and in Norway this very substantial common core of subjects is taught in fully mixed-ability classes.

A common compulsory education need not mean a uniform system as the common schools of many countries have shown. Here schooling is adapted to the aptitudes and learning rate of individuals to enable them to develop their own personality by offering individuals the possibility of discovering and developing their particular aptitudes without establishing any hierarchy among them. Such schools may open on to real life by keeping contact with everything in the environment that can contribute to the learning processes of the pupils. Yet even in performing these goals, it must always be remembered that compulsory schooling augments, rather than supplants, the process of informal education in the home, church, workplace and community which still plays a central part in human social development.

In recognition of the interaction between formal and informal education some education authorities have gone beyond the concept of a common school to that of a community school. The key principles underlying this concept are that the school belongs to the community, and that the two should continuously interact, that the school should be open at all times for all age groups, and that the school should offer a whole range of community sources, including health and leisure facilities. It is claimed that the community school :

a) makes economic use of building and other resources ;
b) helps to destroy many adults' sense of alienation from "formal education" ;
c) facilitates the transition from school to further education or working life ;
d) encourages local initiative.

Alternative Schools

No discussion of school models would be complete without reference to the existence or potential value of alternative types of schools. Broadly conceived, alternative schools have always existed and continue to exist wherever there flourishes a tradition of private as well as public education. Here, however, we are concerned with alternative schools within the public sector.

The idea of an "alternative" school becomes attractive to some parents and teachers when they find the ordinary schools too set in their curricula and methods, in other words, too orthodox. It only makes sense where schools can be and are different from one another and where central and even local controls are lax or nominal. The idea, then (and it takes concrete form in several countries, notably in Denmark and the United States), is that groups of parents, in close collaboration with like-minded teachers run schools according to their own principles. In the United States the metaphor of "magnet" schools has become fashionable with its suggestion that parents and children are drawn irresistibly towards the kinds of ethos and curriculum that best reflect their interests. For the public authorities to encourage alternative schools might certainly seem to fit in with contemporary notions about democratic participation in school management and parental power, two subjects which are discussed below in Chapter VIII.

There is, however, an equity issue lying behind the enthusiasm among some parents and education authorities in some countries for alternative schools. A majority of parents really have no liberty in the choice of a school for their children. For them it is the nearest school or nothing. Where there is complete liberty of choice the sophisticated and well-to-do usually secure places for their children in the schools known to achieve the best academic results. True freedom of choice also presupposes that parents are all equally well-informed about the special characteristics and performances of the schools within their communities. There is also the risk that as some alternative schools attract bright and privileged pupils others will come to be used as isolation centres for delinquent and slow achieving pupils.

This is not to argue that support for alternative schools is misconceived but simply to point out that they may operate to the detriment of the general aims of public policy for the schools if suitable precautions are not taken. Some authorities may, indeed, feel that unless they authorise alternative schools many parents will withdraw from the public system and send their children to private schools.

Private Schools

No single statement covers the position of private schools in all OECD countries nor does any statement do justice to the situation in a single Member country over the course of its educational history. In the United States, for example, public schools were for a long time attended by a relatively small privileged minority and it was not until Horace Mann formulated the modern concept of the public school that schooling became synonymous with general access and democratic functioning in terms of its objectives and its clientele. In other Member countries, private schools have often been founded in order to redress the discrimination of the public system against particular social, ethnic or religious groups, and they have had to fight a long battle for equal treatment with public education. Once this battle has been won, however, they no longer claim to fulfil a specific emancipatory function. In other countries, again, public education systems had to be created to counter the monopoly of the Churches over the schools and could be considered as one of the essential assets of the modern state, with its laïcal and democratic principles. It is important to stress, however, that in several OECD countries Church schools continue to occupy a large or very large place in the overall provision. This is mainly through the weight of tradition but usually also conforms with the belief in many societies that schools should be as autonomous and as reflective of denominational wishes as possible.

The status of private schools varies from one country to another but one broad distinction can be discerned : Are they or are they not bound by government regulations ? To all intents and purposes many private schools operate exactly like

the public schools ; others, however, operate in an idiosyncratic fashion. The extent of the supervision and regulation exercised by the State is usually directly correlated with the extent of its financial commitment. Controversy may arise when the State finances private schools directly or indirectly by grants to pupils or by tax-tuition credits to parents. These schools then appear to confer on their pupils privileges not equally enjoyed by pupils in the public sector. Critics of private schools allege that they are socially divisive and that many of them give their pupils an unfair advantage in seeking access to publicly maintained universities and colleges. At best, the State should suppress them ; at the least, it should give them no financial support. In face of what is always a delicate ethical issue about individual and group liberties and almost always a political flashpoint the authorities in most OECD countries seem to agree on two policies. The first is to ensure that the education and the environmental conditions of private schools do not fall below prescribed minimum standards. The second and more important is to seek to raise the quality of education in the state schools to such a level that invidious comparisons cannot be made between them and the private schools.

III

THE DURATION AND CONTINUITY OF SCHOOLING

Pre-schooling

How and to what extent children develop during the first years of their lives is crucial for their subsequent development and specifically for their ability to extract maximum benefit from compulsory schooling. Classroom instruction is only one of several elements determining the nature of early childhood development but its influence may be paramount. This raises the question : at what age should initiation to compulsory schooling begin ? We propose to consider what sort of pre-school education children appear to need, what sort of problems arise in providing it and how best to facilitate the eventual passage to primary school.

The trend throughout most OECD countries (not in Scandinavia) is for an ever-increasing percentage of the age group of five- to six- or seven-year-olds, depending on the age of entry into the primary school, to attend school for at least part of each day and for the attendance of children in the normal pre-school year to become almost 100 per cent. To take some examples : in Belgium participation rates are as follows : 70 per cent of the age group two-and-a-half to four ; 90 per cent of four- to five-year-olds ; virtually 100 per cent of the age group five to six ; in the Netherlands 90 per cent of four- to five-year-olds are in school ; the same rate for five-year-olds applies in the United States ; in Spain the percentage is 72 per cent and rapidly rising. At the same time, the participation rate for each of the age cohorts three to six is rising proportionately.

The main reason for the expansion of early childhood education is that parents want it for their children, though motives among parents are remarkably divergent. Some are persuaded of the developmental benefits of early schooling for reasons shared with many education authorities which are described in the next paragraph. Other parents quite simply want to place their infants in someone else's custody while they go out to work and do not particularly care whether their children are merely "minded" or are conscientiously helped to learn. It is only just to add that all *working* parents find it expedient to be able to place their infants in day care of one kind or another.

Most public authorities, however, while often having no choice but to respond to the social demand for day-care facilities for young children, as a rule provide *pre-schooling* opportunities from a conviction that they stimulate the mental, physical and social development of children. The evidence adduced from psychological research shows that children can learn rapidly from an early age when the conditions are favourable. There is also evidence to show that the sooner children begin to mix with other children the better it is for their mental and physical well-being. A further special and high priority consideration is that children coming from disadvantaged homes enter primary school with enhanced prospects of adaptability and effective learning under the impetus of an early start. A recent Belgian study, for example, shows that children perform better when having experienced a year of pre-schooling.

But at least four issues arise that are full of significance for what happens in compulsory schooling. First, there is the question of who is to profit from pre-schooling — all, a select few or none. This question is inextricably intertwined with value judgements about freedom of parental choice and who shall provide the facilities. Secondly, what quantity and what kind of schooling are called for ? What is the ideal balance between other child-centred services and schooling, and how are they to be co-ordinated ? Thirdly, who is to be in control ? a question related to that of who will be the providers. Fourthly, to what extent and in what ways should pre-primary and primary schooling be articulated ?

Few OECD countries are likely in the near future to desire or, indeed, to be able to bring down the age at which compulsory schooling begins and to offer universal provision of pre-school education (between 1960 and 1970 only New Zealand extended the period of compulsory schooling by lowering the starting age). At the same time, they would not contemplate preventing groups of parents from combining together to provide pre-school facilities or private agencies, whether they be profit-making or not. The conjunction of these two facts can lead to a situation in which pre-schooling becomes available to the children of better-off parents but not to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This in turn can only have the result of increasing the handicaps with which disadvantaged children start primary school.

To avoid glaring inequities of this kind the only solution seems to be to treat disadvantaged children as a social priority. This then implies pursuing a public policy of attempting to offer pre-schooling opportunities to all children in the long run but in the short run deliberately concentrating available resources on the disadvantaged. The danger is that the public authorities may offset the middle-class interest in pre-school education by giving priority to poor children in public institutions, thereby leaving out children from the lower-middle income groups.

The second issue is concerned with how much education or schooling very young children should be given and where it should fit in with other services. The prevailing view is that it should be informal and relaxed and in no way an explicit preparation for formal schooling : let the children learn spontaneously, at their own speed and through play. As to co-ordination with other services this is a question of using purpose-built, or at least purpose-designed, accommodation and employing the services of staff with a variety of experience and skills. While not disputing the desirability of informality and flexibility many educational administrators insist that policy makers and the executive authorities must be able to operate within a certain number of defined parameters and that these should provide the bones of an institutional and a professional framework.

Thirdly, there is the question of control. Many parents, probably the great majority, wish to retain full control over the development of their own children. They are fearful of anything which smacks of authoritarian management of their children, which they frequently and usually unfairly equate with professionalism ; "we do not want professionals raising our children". Clearly the relationship between teachers and those who are concerned with the professional care of young children as well as many parents is already or is, at least potentially, a sensitive area, which also spills over into the primary school.

The fourth and last issue concerns the articulation between pre-primary and primary education (we discuss this problem below), which is not easy to achieve in practice because of the frequently striking contrast between the two in aims, environment and fundamental approaches.

How Long ?

What is the appropriate span of compulsory schooling ? With few exceptions OECD Member countries have prolonged the duration of compulsory schooling

since the end of the Second World War. The decision to prolong has been strongly influenced by social demand, for in the majority of countries where an extra year has been added, the retention rate for that year had already reached the order of approximately 80 per cent. It should also be noted that the prolongation coincided with the entry of far more children into the primary school as a result of the population explosion of the 1950s. The norm is now nine years. Overnight, Greece recently extended the duration from six to nine years ; Turkey opted for eight years in 1973 ; Portugal is considering a draft law to extend the duration from six to nine years ; in Belgium legislation is pending to extend the duration from eight to ten years in the short term and up to eleven years in the long term. Italy and Spain remain with eight years. The bold decision of the Greek authorities to increase the duration by no less than 50 per cent, in spite of the daunting financial cost and the enormous logistical problems entailed, was inspired by the belief that in a modern society the young cannot be adequately prepared to become good citizens and to contribute to an expanding economy in less than nine years. Belgium explains why it is contemplating an extension of compulsory schooling :

i) school has to supply pupils with an increasing amount of knowledge ;
ii) it must also provide an overall education in order to develop dynamic patterns of cognition, emotion, action and moral behaviour within the context of the various ideologies and philosophies prevailing in our pluralist society ; consequently, children require a longer period of contact with schools ;
iii) since there is an increasing tendency for schools to aim at teaching how to learn and assimilate basic knowledge instead of merely memorising it, this also requires more time ;
iv) the number of teaching hours per week and the length of the school year have both gradually shrunk ; extending the number of years at school should therefore compensate the smaller number of school hours per week or year ;
v) some school-leavers have a vocational training certificate and it is not possible to shorten the time required to prepare for this qualification.

Germany, which now has nine years of compulsory schooling, speaks of the introduction of a tenth year of education as one of the most important education policy issues of the decade. This is not just a question of the quantitative aspects, but of the structural implications. These are a matter of political debate in parties and parliaments at present. The issue is not just whether a tenth year of full-time education should be made compulsory, but even more what the relationship of a tenth year should be to apprenticeship and to BGJ (basic vocational education year). We take up the issue of an additional year in Chapter VII.

But there no longer seems any inclination on the part of OECD countries in general to extend compulsory schooling beyond nine to ten years. On the other hand, many countries actively encourage pupils to choose to study further out of a conviction that this is both intrinsically dessesiisirable and in response to individual demand. The result is that the rate of participation in the ninth to tenth year of schooling is in many countries approaching 100 per cent. As with pre-school education, the case of Belgium is striking, for only 6 000 children (4 per cent) out of an overall population of 160 000 per age group leave school at the compulsory leaving age : of these 6 000 school leavers, 4 000 will start an apprenticeship in order to learn a trade. In parallel, participation rates in the eleventh and twelfth years rose sharply throughout the seventies.

The reason for not wishing to extend the compulsory period of schooling has had little to do with the cost factor, at least until recently, but rather with two other factors. First, it reflects government and public realisation that many young people

not merely do not want to stay at school any longer than is absolutely necessary but resent having to stay for the full compulsory period. Indeed, many education authorities are aware that some people drop out of school illegally or attend only irregularly. There are even proposals in some countries that young people who can find a job should be allowed to leave school early. Though committed to an extension of compulsory schooling, Belgium is hesitant to make the necessary changes before taking on the thousands of young people who now leave weary and frustrated after suffering the ill effects of inadequate schooling. Secondly, many countries which once hoped that the mere extension of compulsory schooling would automatically lead to more equal academic results now fear that they may have been mistaken.

So we find that the majority of young people in OECD countries go through compulsory school for nine or ten years. In addition, a large and increasing majority voluntarily attend pre-primary schools and complete the upper secondary cycle, thereby spending altogether fourteen or fifteen years in school. A cause for concern is that those most in need of an early start or of a late finish are often precisely those who go to school for the compulsory period — or in practice for an even shorter time — and not a day longer. We shall revert to this key problem in subsequent sections.

Continuity between Stages of Schooling

Necessity for strong links

In recent years growing attention has been paid to the links between school and the world of work and between school and further academic study. However, links within the compulsory education sector itself and between compulsory education and the pre-primary sector tend to be neglected, although they are crucially important. In some countries, there is still an institutional break between a primary and post-primary cycle ; in others, there is not an institutional but a *de facto* break between the two. One illustration of this break is the fact that teachers in primary and post-primary schools are still often trained in separate institutions ; another is that there is very often no contact or only perfunctory contact between the staffs of primary and post-primary schools. Yet it would seem essential to harmonise the aims of the two cycles and to facilitate the transition from one cycle to the next. This cannot be achieved without close liaison between the respective staffs.

Yet another link that appears to need strengthening is that between school years. It is assumed that there is a logical progression from one age level to another, but there is a growing realisation that in practice there is frequently a lack of articulation.

Pre-primary to primary

The problem of articulation between pre-primary and primary schooling has attracted attention in several national contributions to the present report. The EEC has also devoted much study to the transition from pre-primary to primary schooling. (Commission des Communautés européennes, 1980). Thus, Belgium : "... pre-primary education should ensure the smoothest possible transition from the family environment (or its substitute) to the school system. The child should find the kind of welcome and harmonious surroundings which will enable it to settle down on its first day at school". The Spanish special report on "Links between pre-school and primary education" discusses in detail research and development activity in that country aiming at closer curricular continuity between pre-school provisions and the first years of compulsory education. The Belgian report on "Renewal of basic

schooling" gives an account of similar efforts to ease the transition to primary school by forming an integrated 5- to 8-year-old cycle, aimed specifically at reducing the number of slow achieving pupils between 6 and 7 years of age. "Integration of nursery and primary education into one continuous educational process" is also a main priority in the recent reform of Dutch education. In France, the government has recently decided to integrate fully nursery and primary education. The authorities in the Netherlands have decided to integrate the pre-primary and primary schools so as to create a single school for 4- to 12-year-olds. They have done so partly in deference to the wishes of parents but above all in order to ensure that education be a continuous process. Recognising the risk that the ethos of the primary school may become dominant they emphasise that it must adapt to the informality of the pre-primary school rather than the converse. Thus, in Japan :

> "While pre-school education is characterised by a curriculum which emphasises specific and comprehensive experiences and activities for infants, primary education is predicated on a curriculum classified into subject areas. It has been the basic policy to keep studying and developing a type of curriculum that will assure smooth transition from the former to the latter in parallel with the infants' and children's mental and physical growth. For this purpose, a number of schools have been designated for experimentation from the angle of close linkage between those two levels of education".

OECD's recent publication *Caring for Young Children* (OECD/CERI, 1982) postulates five conditions for the successful impact of pre-schooling on the subsequent development of the child in and out of school :

i) Close collaboration between pre-schools and parents is indispensable ;
ii) Besides play, the child should also begin to acquire knowledge and skills ;
iii) The staff must be properly trained ;
iv) There should be continuity of teaching ;
v) The learning element should be only one part of a concerted effort to deal with all the child's needs.

The report also issues a warning that although it may seem ultimately desirable to bring about an organic fusion between pre-primary and primary schooling, the former can only suffer if it becomes too institutionalised.

Primary to post-primary

The transition from primary to lower secondary school (middle school) is also fraught with problems in some countries. This normally involves a change from class teachers to subject specialist teachers and from a smaller more socially intimate school unit to a larger one with a distinctly different ethos and cultural pattern. There are reports from several countries of attempts to ease the transition. A simple measure is to supply the receiving school with as much information as possible about each pupil's strengths and weaknesses, as was the intention of the recently abolished dossier which used to follow each French pupil up through the grades. In many countries, attempts are made to augment such communications by personal contact and to take primary pupils on visits to their future secondary school. Schools in Australia, the United Kingdom, and other countries frequently organise contact of this type. There is a risk, of course, as was feared by teachers in France, that a dossier might be used to a child's disadvantage rather than to his credit.

A secondary school can be made more personal to its pupils by a "house system" — a common pattern in the United Kingdom. The "house" serves as a unit for links with parents and for organising personal guidance to the pupils. Another British measure is the creation by some local education authorities of a middle school which is intended to serve as a bridging institution between primary and

secondary schooling, maintaining the class teacher system for most purposes but with specialist reinforcements. Secondary school teachers in England and Wales receive an unusually specialised training : they are normally prepared to teach only one subject. Still, to soften the pupils' transition from class teachers to subject teachers, many secondary schools deploy teachers to teach two or three subjects in the early secondary forms. Reduced division of labour in teaching is also used to further personal pupil-teacher contacts in countries where secondary school teaching is less specialised. A small team of teachers may work as a team with a sub-group of pupils, a pattern actively promoted in the Scandinavian countries.

The problem of a sharp curricular disjunction between primary and secondary school is made more manageable when the entire range of compulsory education is planned as a unitary system. The Turkish report notes that lack of curricular articulation between the primary and middle schools was a main reason for the 1973 decision to adopt a unified system of 8-year basic education :

> "The programmes and administration of primary and middle schools did not fit each other, because of the existing discrepancy between primary and middle schools. The students who continue their education at middle school level have difficulties in adapting themselves to this new teaching-learning system. It was necessary to remove the existing incompatibility between the curricula of primary and middle schools."

The problem of transfer to secondary education also seems to receive less attention in countries with long-established comprehensive secondary schools in comparison with countries with parallel types of secondary school or where recently established comprehensives still retain much of the curricular distinctiveness of the schools replaced.

Transfers to new schools

Within a unitary ends-on system of schools, careful design of curriculum content and pupil visits to the receiving school can ease the transition to a new school, though problems will still arise when pupils move to another neighbourhood in countries where there is considerable local autonomy in curriculum design. But even when pupils stay within the same locality, the problem of adjustment to new classmates and new teachers remains and is exacerbated if a pupil in a new school is faced with different teachers and classmates in different subjects. In the United Kingdom :

> "Transition between schools can pose problems both in transfer from one stage of schooling to the next, and when a pupil moves from one area to another. Variations in organisational pattern, curriculum and examination syllabuses can create learning problems, particularly when the pupil moves from one part of the United Kingdom to another ; even with a local education authority area differing approaches among schools can create barriers."

Teachers and continuity

There are obvious differences between countries in educational values. This also applies to the extent to which stress is placed on the values derived from specialisation or division of labour (among schools, teachers and pupils), as against values derived from sustained personal contact and shared experience. Stress on the advantage of division of labour accords with a pattern whereby children progress through a series of specialised institutions, e.g. nursery school, infant school, junior school and secondary school as in the typical English pattern, and where specialist teaching and course options are introduced early and dominate the curriculum

towards the end of compulsory schooling. Conversely, emphasis on sustained personal contact and shared learning experience favours a system in which a school unit comprises several "stages" of education, where the same classroom group is kept intact as the child progresses through the grades, where pupils have very limited scope for optional subjects even at the secondary level, and where the class teacher system is retained throughout compulsory schooling only with minor concessions to specialist inputs. It is likely that problems of transition are mitigated in such a system but it might be expected that specialisation among pupils and staff would foster greater attainment of excellence in individual subjects and match the curriculum more closely to individual interests and capacities. The advent of falling rolls, the implications of which will be discussed in Chapter IV, has major implications for the division of labour in schools.

There is a growing tendency in some education systems to try to arrange that children have contact with the same class teacher for a number of successive years. This means abandoning the traditional practice of each teacher in the primary school being confined more or less permanently to dealing every year with children of the same age cohort, for example, seven-year-olds. For the first four to five years of schooling it is not too difficult to choose between two options :

a) for the same teacher to take an age cohort right through the whole cycle ;
b) for one teacher to take an age cohort through the first three years and for another teacher to take them through the next two or three years.

In lower secondary education, that is from the sixth or seventh to the ninth or tenth year, more problems arise in having the same class teacher continuously for three or four years but the practice is by no means ruled out and possesses definite advantages.

Critics of teacher continuity in the sense described raise the same objection as they do to single-teacher schools : supposing children are exposed continuously for three or four years to an incompetent or unsympathetic teacher ; will their development not be irreparably damaged ? The risk manifestly exists but can be obviated by the watchfulness of headmasters, other teachers and an effective teacher-parent liaison.

The Danish basic school is within OECD a striking example of a system designed to promote continuity and sustained personal contact. Whenever possible, school units are organised to include the full range of compulsory schooling as well as a pre-school year and a voluntary additional year for the 16- to 17-year-olds. Teachers are formally qualified to teach the mother tongue and one other subject at all levels and sometimes one teacher will be responsible for the same group of pupils throughout their nine years of compulsory schooling. Recent changes in Norwegian teacher education and proposals currently under consideration in Sweden also indicate a move in those countries towards a modified class-teacher system in the lower secondary stages. Swedish practice modifies specialisation by stages and facilitates continuity by training teachers to operate at several levels.

IV

SCHOOL AND CLASS SIZE AND PATTERNS OF ATTENDANCE

School Size

The existing size of schools has been determined less by pedagogical and environmental considerations than the geographical distribution of the population, that is, whether there is a predominance of urban or rural areas and low or dense urban concentrations of population. For example, whereas in 1972 only 4.1 per cent of Germany's primary schools enrolled fewer than fifty pupils, the corresponding percentages in 1976 were 45.5 per cent for France and 47.1 per cent for Italy. In Norway, whereas urban areas account for 16.6 per cent of small schools (fewer than 50 pupils) and 10.4 per cent of large schools (over 500 pupils), the percentages for rural areas are 41.5 and 0.5 per cent respectively (see Table 2).

In recent years, the trend has been to eliminate small schools and replace them by consolidated schools located at strategic centres, especially starting from the lower secondary stage. One large school is more economic to build and to maintain in terms of unit costs than a gaggle of small schools. Moreover, the very comprehensive model presupposes large size. Largeness, its advocates claim, permits diversity, the teaching of a wide range of subjects and the provision of ample laboratory, library, auditoria, sports and other facilities.

This reasoning also chimes with the view that larger school districts may be more "efficient" in providing good education. For example, in the United States :

> "It has been argued that it is more feasible and economical to provide high quality educational facilities in larger school districts than in small ones. This has been the major reason for the extensive consolidation of small school districts. In 1945, there were more than 101,000 school districts throughout the United States. The number has been steadily reduced until, in 1977, only 16,200 remained".

This view, it is to be noted, also reflects a function of administrative control, namely, that whereas primary schools are often managed by quite small local government authorities, secondary schools are usually managed by relatively big ones. The former are inclined to preserve small schools, the latter not.

There have always been opponents of large schools but it is significant that today criticisms of them have become widespread and are uttered by a growing body of professional and lay opinion. Critics allege that large schools are detached from the community, bureaucratised and depersonalised. Only small schools allow for group identity among the teachers and pupils and real contacts with the

Table 2. **Percentage of primary schools with less than 100 or more than 500 pupils, 1965-1976**[1]

	1965			1970			1972			1974			1976		
	— 50	50 — 100	+ 500	— 50	50 — 100	+ 500	— 50	50 — 100	+ 500	— 50	50 — 100	+ 500	— 50	50 — 100	+ 500
GERMANY[2]				6.7	9.1	14.1	4.1	7.1	17.7						
AUSTRALIA	33.9[3]	21.9[4]	18.6[5]	28.3[3]	21.5[4]	22.4[5]	25.6[3]	21.4[4]	22.4[5]	23.5[3]	21.0[4]	23.2[5]	20.6[3]	20.4[4]	23.7[5]
AUSTRIA	22.5	25.4	0.4												
BELGIUM	37.3	24.6	0.9	33.9	24.0	1.2	45.6[6]	11.8[7]	42.6[8]						
CANADA[9]							9.6	8.5	22.1	9.5	8.0	21.6	9.6	7.8	18.7
FINLAND															
Basic school							40.1[10]	38.8[11]	3.3						
Lower cycle										44.6[10]	38.6[11]	1.8			
FRANCE				46.1	20.1	0.3				46.7	19.6	0.4	45.5	19.4	0.2
IRELAND	37.5	38.0	3.3	36.4	35.7	3.7	29.5	31.7	5.4	26.1	31.2	6.1	23.9	29.2	6.7
ITALY				54.5	15.7	6.4	51.2	16.2	7.0	47.1	16.3	7.1	47.1	17.2	7.1
JAPAN	14.1	10.9	26.8	15.6	11.5	27.9	15.7	11.4	29.9	16.5	11.7	28.7			
NEW ZEALAND	42.3[12]	10.9[13]	7.5	39.9[12]	11.2[13]	11.3	37.8[14]	16.1[15]	9.1[16]	35.5[14]	16.1[15]	9.5[16]	28.9	16.2	15.6
NORWAY[17]															
Urban areas							15.3	10.7	20.6	15.2	10.4	16.7	16.6	10.7	10.4
Rural areas							39.2	18.0	2.7	37.2	18.3	2.5	41.5	19.8	0.5
NETHERLANDS	15.3[18]	13.5[18]	1.0[18]	11.9[19]	10.1[20]	0.9[21]							10.2[22]	9.1[23]	0.7[24]
SWEDEN													21.5	20.2	10.5

1. Or year closest to that indicated.
2. Including upper primary.
3. Less than 36.
4. 36 to 100.
5. More than 400.
6. French and German language systems.
7. From 51 to 70 pupils, French and German language systems.
8. Over 70, French and German language systems.
9. Primary and secondary schools.
10. Less than 35.
11. 35 to 109.
12. Up to 70.
13. 71 to 110.
14. Up to 60.
15. 61 to 120.
16. 511 and over.
17. Basic schools (e.g. grades 1-9). The percentage of small schools would be higher for primary education alone. In 1976 the distinction is made between densely and sparsely populated school districts.
18. 489 and over.
19. Up to 63.
20. 64 to 95.
21. 503 and over.
22. Up to 58.
23. 59 to 90.
24. 497 and over.

Source: National statistics.

neighbouring community. A school is too big, it is often said, when the principal cannot possibly know all the pupils.

Norway is one country where few school issues have been more hotly debated in recent years than the question of school size. A post-war trend towards the consolidation of school units was arrested in 1970 in response to two pressures. The first was the insistence of small communities that it was essential to retain a school in their midst. The second was the increasing reaction against professional ideas about the way a school should function — the idea, for example, that big schools are required so as to ensure a wide spread of specialised subject teaching. Parliament has, therefore, enacted a law restricting the maximum school size to 450 and indicating that 200 to 250 may be the optimal size. This implies an emphasis on the predominance of class teachers, each one normally qualified to teach three subjects, a topic which was considered above with respect to the continuity of teachers and a common curriculum.

Norway has reacted against bigness. On the other hand, really small schools pose a serious problem for some countries, including Greece, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia, where many one-teacher primary schools still exist. In Spain a large number of one-teacher schools have been closed and replaced by regional schools to which students are brought by special transport and where they are given meals. Examiners who recently carried out an educational policy review of Greece had this to say on the problem :

> "One obvious, though initially costly, solution to the one- and two-teacher school problem in at least some areas might be to set up centrally located primary schools and this is indeed the preferred policy of the Ministry of Education. It runs counter to the deep desire of most local communities to preserve their village schools. We can only point out that a decision about whether to retain or abandon village schools has to be made in the light of broad social and environmental as well as pedagogical considerations. To abolish a village school can sometimes lead to the effective destruction of a community and a way of life" (OECD, 1982 : 14).

What should be the optimum size of a school is ultimately, of course, a function of which of the models for organizing compulsory schooling described in Chapter II societies choose to adopt, together with the population factor. An all-age school (seven to ten years) will necessarily be larger than a primary school that caters for only the first four to six years ; an all-age secondary school (lower plus upper combined) will be bigger than a separate lower secondary school ; any model of school in an urban area is likely to be bigger than the same model in a rural area. The critical question is what is the irreducible minimum and the maximum size that should be permitted whatever the model selected. It is to be noted that where the range of subjects widens at the secondary level, more classes must be offered and hence more space must be found. This means that in many areas, pupils in scattered primary schools have to be fed into consolidated schools. In other words, though the all-age model may be pedagogically the best one it is not always feasible for local authorities to adopt it.

On the other hand, it is questionable whether economic considerations should be allowed to justify the automatic fusion of lower and upper secondary schooling into one large school rather than the maintenance of two separate schools. In another recent educational policy review — this time of Yugoslavia — the examiners argued that

> "different models of secondary schooling are bound to have differential pedagogical and, possibly, career effects. For example, when the years nine and ten are located in an eight-year compulsory school, does not that offer an experience for students different from the experience of students in a four-year

secondary school ? And is there no difference between the ethos of a ten-year school and an eight-year school ? Does not the presence of boys and girls (young men and women) of 16 and 17 have an effect on the rest of the school ?... We would simply recommend that searching investigations of what is happening in schools — compulsory as well as secondary — as a result of the reform [of secondary education] should be undertaken with a view to ascertaining which models work best and identifying good practice" (OECD, 1981*b* : 68-69).

To dismantle large schools is scarcely feasible, particularly during a period of continuing economic constraints. Ways have to be found, therefore, of developing internally not one identity group but many identity groups and of interacting with the communities served by the school. At the same time, the possible disadvantages of very large schools should perhaps serve as a caution against building any new ones.

Class Size

The average number of pupils per class has been diminishing since 1965 in all OECD countries except for Italy. At the same time, the variations in pupil/teacher ratios among countries remain wide. At about 1976, the average class size was approximately 38 in Ireland, over 35 in Portugal, 33 in Japan and 30 in England and Wales, whereas it was 20 or less in Denmark, Italy and Sweden, in the first three years of schooling. There appears to be a trend, notably in the Scandinavian countries, to reduce class size in the early years in conformity with research findings that, contrary to traditional practice, children need more and not less individual attention at the beginning of the school cycle (see Table 3).

In all countries, except for Ireland and the United Kingdom, there are more pupils per class in secondary schools (in either lower or lower and upper combined) than in primary schools. This is decidedly an average phenomenon, however, because whereas the class size is likely to be standard throughout a primary school, it is a highly variable factor in that majority of secondary schools where pupils can attend optional courses and do so in uneven numbers or in those schools where pupils are distributed in classes according to their ability.

From time to time research findings are published that indicate no correlation, or at least no pronounced correlation between class size and cognitive performance. These findings appear to conflict with the contemporary wisdom that small classes are best for the pupils and that the only pragmatic way to help slow achievers in any subject to make satisfactory progress is by teaching them individually or in very small groups. They also ignore the improved affective development of children which advocates claim for small classes. What certainly seems self-evident is that an emphasis on individualised learning is not compatible with large classes for the teacher must have time to discuss work progress with each pupil.

Falling Enrolments and their Consequences

The issue of school size has recently become critical for many OECD countries as they move from a post-Second World War situation in which demographic expansion could be taken for granted into a situation in which school populations are already declining and will decline more or less sharply in the 1980s. The total school population in the United States dropped from 50 million to 45 million during the decade 1970 to 1980 and will continue to fall. In all countries, except Spain and Ireland, the population in the age group 5-14 will decline or will have declined by 1990. Thus, to take an extreme example, the index of population growth for the 5-14 age group in Germany increased 100 in 1965 to 119 in 1974 and will fall back to 75 by

Table 3. Average number of pupils per class, 1965-1976[1]

	1965	1970	1972	1974	1976
GERMANY					
Primary	34.7	34.5	33.1	30.5	27.7
Upper primary		33.0	32.2	30.9	29.3
Middle school	32.4	32.1	31.9	31.5	31.1
Gymnasia	31.2	31.6	32.1	32.2	31.7
AUSTRIA					
Primary[2]	32.2	31.2	29.5	28.1	25.5
Upper primary	30.0	30.3	29.6	28.6	26.5
Secondary (1st and 2nd cycles)	29.3	29.8	30.0	29.2	28.9
BELGIUM					
Primary	21.8	21.0	20.4	20.4	
DENMARK					
Basic school					
1st year	21.7	20.8	21.6	20.3	19.3
5th year	21.7	20.4	20.2	20.0	20.3
7th year	22.8	20.7	20.2	20.0	19.9
9th year	16.3	16.1	16.1	18.3[3]	18.3[3]
FINLAND					
Lower-cycle basic school					20.7
Upper-cycle basic school					27.8
Middle schools					
1st year					31.3
3rd year					35.3
5th year					33.8
FRANCE					
Primary	27.8	25.1	24.8	24.0	23.7
1st-cycle secondary	27.5	26.4	25.8	25.3	25.3
IRELAND					
Primary					
Single grade class			40.0	37.7	
Consecutive-grade class			31.8	31.5	
Multi-grade class			24.8	25.0	
1st-cycle secondary			24.6	24.0	
ITALY					
Primary	16.2	17.2	17.5	17.1	17.0
1st-cycle secondary	22.6	21.6	21.9	22.2	22.6
JAPAN					
Primary	35.1	32.8		32.9	33.1
1st-cycle secondary	40.9	36.1		36.7	37.1
NETHERLANDS					
Primary	31.5	30.1	29.5	28.1	27.1
NORWAY					
Primary - grades 1-6			19.9	20.0	20.1
Lower secondary - grades 7-9			24.6	24.2	23.9
PORTUGAL					
Primary	39.6	42.2	39.9	37.7	35.2
UNITED KINGDOM					
England and Wales	32.6	32.6	31.5	30.4	29.4
Primary	—	23.0	22.8	29.0	27.9
Middle-secondary	27.9			22.7	22.3
Scotland					
Primary		32.8	31.4	28.9	
Secondary		20.3	20.1	19.8	
Northern Ireland					
Primary	30.9	30.5	29.6	28.7	27.7
SWEDEN					
Basic school					
1st to 3 rd year	23.1	23.3	20.8	20.6	20.0
4th to 6th year			24.0	24.2	24.0
7th to 9th year			26.5	26.2	26.0

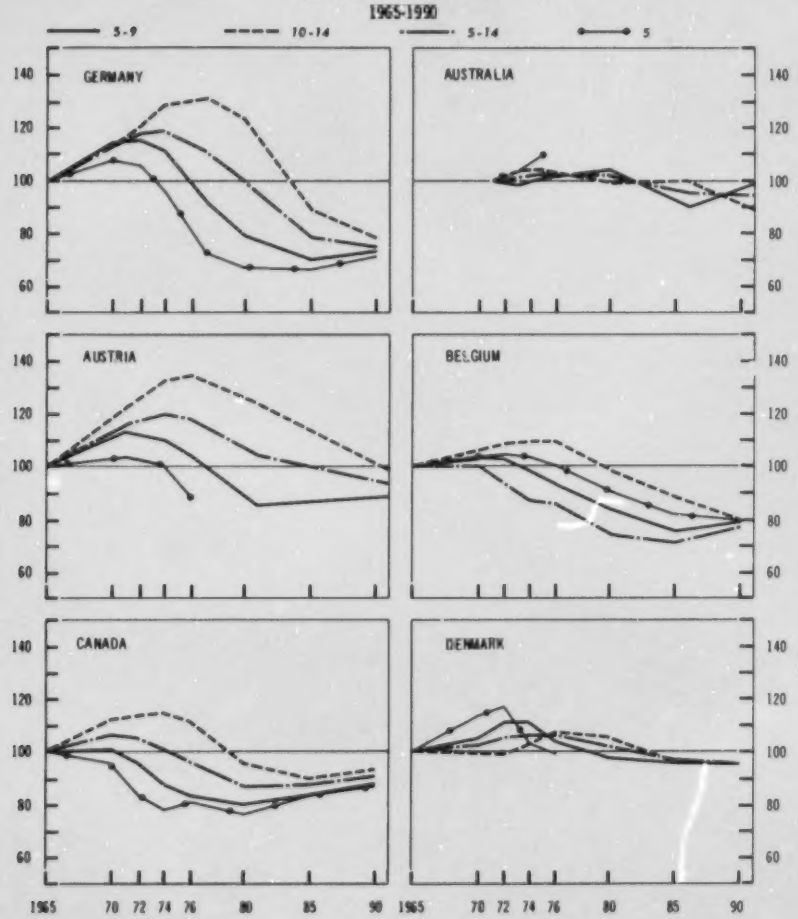
1. Or year closest to that indicated.
2. Including upper primary classes of primary schools.
3. Including the second year of studies in middle schools.

Source: National statistics.

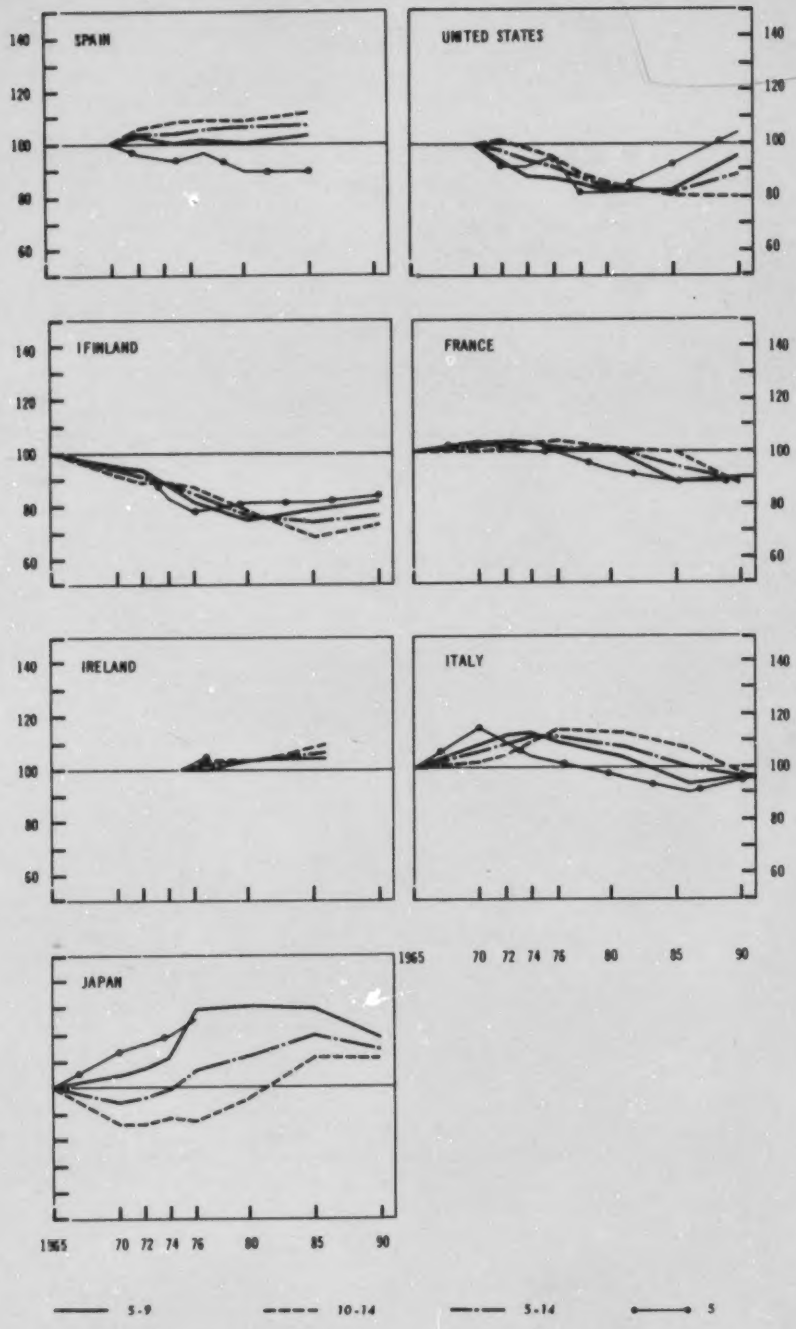
1990, i.e. an increase of 19 per cent followed by a decrease of 35 per cent. Depending on the country, this decrease of growth began or will begin as follows : 1970 (Finland), 1972 (CKANADA=; 1974 (Belgium), 1976 (Austria, France, Germany), 1980 (Denmark, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom), 1985 (Australia) and 1990 (Japan). It should be noted that a reverse trend will occur in some countries towards 1990 when enrolments will begin to expand. It can be assumed from the trend in the population aged 5 that the same will occur after 1990 in many other countries (see Graph III). In some schools in some areas there are bound to be more and more empty places. The dilemma facing the public authorities is whether to support smaller schools or simply to close down many schools. In several countries, their dilemma is sharpened by the fact that whereas enrolments in rural schools are falling, enrolments in city schools are rising, often rapidly, as a result of urban drift.

Graph III

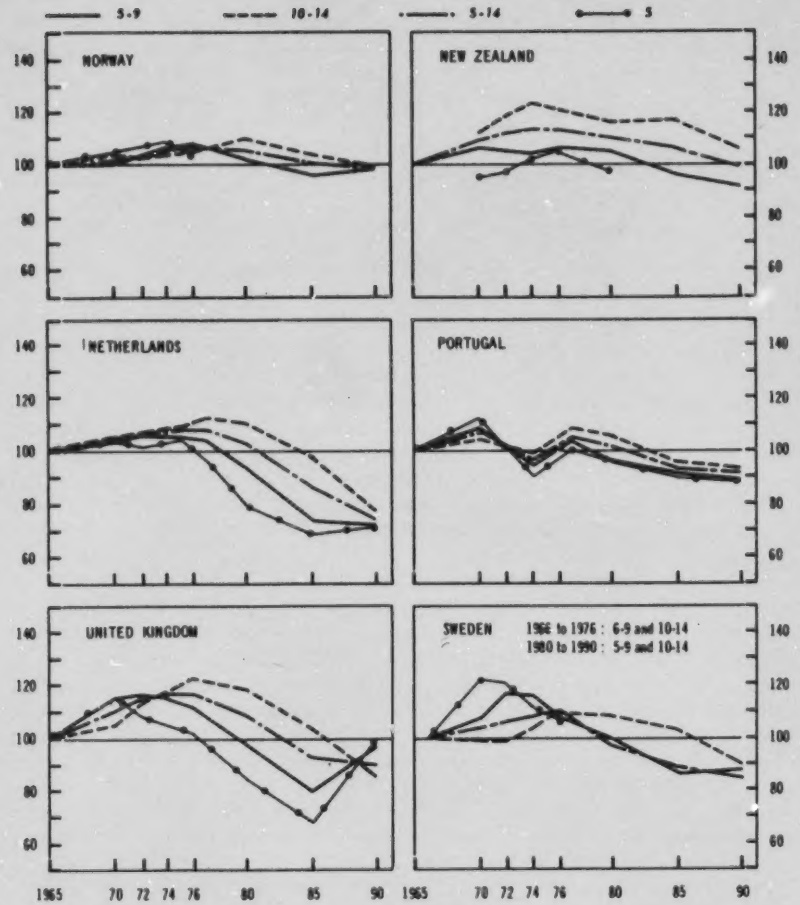
INDEX OF POPULATION GROWTH FOR THE AGE GROUPS
5 to 9, 10 to 14, 5 to 14 and 5
1965-1990



Graph III (cont.)



Graph III (cont.)



Source : National statistics.

Education administrators are generally reluctant to see a school closed irrevocably not only for sentimental reasons but because they like to anticipate sudden changes in the demand for building space. Yet in straitened economic times most governments expect to see some reduction in educational costs to reflect, if only partially, the declining demand. Both educationists and governments might then readily agree to seize the opportunity to close schools which are dilapidated or lacking up-to-date facilities.

Schools in the inner cities experiencing falling rolls can often be merged without damaging the children in them or the cohesion of local communities. To shut down a village school however, may have the effect of destroying the very life of the village by removing an essential centre of community cooperation and deterring parents with young children from living there. This would appear to be one sector where the importance of formulating educational policy in the light of other social policies is vividly illustrated.

When contemplating the closure of schools it would seem prudent to anticipate the likely consequences of a continuing and perhaps increasing energy shortage. Rising energy prices inexorably lead to steep rises in heating, cooking and above all transport costs. This prospect obviously counsels caution in consolidating schools, especially in rural areas, for it may well be more economical as well as culturally advisable to preserve even small schools rather than face prohibitive transport charges. Retaining schools in good physical condition, whether in urban or rural areas, is also worth considering as a means towards using them as multi-purpose community centres, not least, for the education of adults.

Patterns of Attendance

The prevailing pattern of the distribution and length of the school day, week and year, the length of lessons and the time to be devoted to homework, where it is prescribed, is generally taken to be sacrosanct. This is intriguing for two reasons. First, it may well be that patterns of attendance introduced long ago to fit in with the social and industrial conditions then prevailing are not compatible with the conditions prevailing today or with the contemporary objectives of compulsory schooling. Second, the patterns vary considerably from one country to another. Whether this is a significant fact or not may at least warrant some investigation.

Some comparisons will illustrate the variations. The number of days of annual attendance ranges from 175 in France up to 240 in Germany and Spain. The number of hours of weekly attendance ranges from 18 in the first year of school in Denmark up to 35 from the fifth year onwards in Sweden. Whereas in some countries (for example, Spain, France and the Netherlands) the duration of the school week is the same irrespective of the age of pupils, in others (for example, Denmark) it varies according to the pupils' ages — the younger the pupils the shorter the week. Again, the length of classes varies from 45 minutes to 60 minutes.

There has been relatively so little investigation of what is here described as attendance patterns that it seems prudent simply to pose some questions to be studied in the light of children's learning rythms, power of concentration, physical health and emotional satisfaction as well as in the light of what is best for teachers, parents and the community. What are the merits of a four-term as opposed to a three-term year ? Should the traditional long summer holiday be reduced and the period saved be used to provide longer winter and spring holidays ? Disadvantaged children often lose ground during the long summer recess. There is also a practical conjunctural factor : making a virtue of necessity, some education authorities are reacting to the intensifying energy shortage by altering the pattern of school holidays. In colder climates fuel can be conserved by shortening summer holidays and lengthening winter breaks. What is the ideal length of the school day ? Is it better to start early in the morning and finish in the early afternoon or to start and finish later ?

How long should class periods be ? Or should the very notion of periods be abandoned ? Japan favours greater flexibility ; with a view to realizing a freer and more enjoyable school life without lowering educational standards, the standard school hours for each subject area have been reduced, and school hours have been allowed to be adjusted in a creative and ingenious way in conformity with actual conditions in each region and school. France has recently opted for periods with an average length of 45 minutes.

V

CURRICULUM ISSUES

A Widening Definition

If, as a definition of 'curriculum", we choose the flexible one adopted in the Australian report, "the curriculum includes the whole experience which a child undergoes during schooling and covers the educational aims and goals, courses, classroom activities, staff-student relationships, resources and many other factors which impinge on the teaching-learning situation in schools", then the area covered by the curriculum during compulsory schooling has grown wider in most countries, and especially in the lower secondary stage. The shift from cognitive learning to all-round intellectual and social development requires schools to assume a wider responsibility for the learning experiences of their pupils. The German debate about a longer school day reflects a desire to strengthen the socialisation function of schooling. In Scandinavia, students' homework has increasingly become converted to independent study based at school and schools have in recent years assumed greater responsibility for organising voluntary leisure activities of various kinds. Student council activities are taken seriously and are more encouraged for younger pupils than previously. In many countries schools have been asked to devote time to informing and guiding pupils about occupational life. And schools now seek to give guidance about sex, drug problems, and the mass media. Indeed, they are expected to engage in moral education while yet being less directive than in the past.

Control over the Curriculum

The curriculum of a school is determined at different organisational levels within an education system. In most countries, there are legally binding rules or guidelines issued by central authorities. Further regulations are sometimes imposed by local authorities. Within these regulations, the school and, ultimately, the individual teacher adopt organisational procedures and lesson plans, using instructional materials which in many countries must also have been approved by higher authorities. There are marked distances among OECD countries in the extent to which the curriculum-in-action (classroom practice) is circumscribed by regulations issued from higher levels in the administrative hierarchy of a national school system. In some countries e.g. Sweden, Norway, France, central authorities exert strong influence. In Germany, much regulating authority is vested in the government of each *Land*. In most states in the United States many regulations governing the work of the schools originate at the school district level. In the United Kingdom, each school has a considerable autonomy in framing its own curriculum within the tangible constraints posed by external examinations and other factors.

Tight central control over curriculum content in civic and moral education has in the past often been used to transmit a culturally narrow orthodoxy, though it can

presumably also be designed to further tolerance and examination of conflicting values. Nevertheless, in a democratic political culture which stresses the importance of informed independent judgement and which legitimates a plurality of moral and political beliefs detailed central prescription seems inconsistent with widely defined curricular aims which stress moral and civic education. Other conditions also militate against tight central control : the prevailing child-centred view of pedagogy with its stress on relating teaching to the pupils' active interests and to influences outside the school, and the modern stress on the open and changing aspect of scientific knowledge. Furthermore, the growing realisation that centrally issued regulations are ill-suited instruments for pedagogic renewal is a force for decentralisation and for emphasizing the school-based aspect of curriculum development in countries where "curriculum" traditionally has been associated with centrally issued documents. On the other hand, in England and Wales, the system where school autonomy in curricular decisions is stronger than in most other OECD countries, there is at present a resurgence of central initiative and concern to ensure, by consultation and guidance, greater co-ordination between the curricula of individual schools, especially for the 11 to 16 age group — a move in part motivated by the desire to ensure that pupils, regardless of school, will reach adequate levels of attainment in basic skills, especially literacy and numeracy — a topic to which we return below. Further arguments against centrally issued regulations are that they militate against concepts of open education, community schools, increased participation of parents and students, and the professional responsibility of teachers in the planning and conduct of teaching.

It is tempting to speculate that just as increasingly diffuse educational aims — concerned as much with the formation of attitudes as with transmission of clearly defined cognitive content — imply a shift towards the school in curricular decisions, so renewed concern about the pupils' attainment of basic cognitive skills may in practice lead to a tightening up of curricular definitions and outside control. The current call for "back to basics" and "accountability" which is especially vocal in the public debate on education in some Anglo-Saxon countries is a reaction against educational practices legitimated by a wide definition of "curriculum". Rightly or wrongly, the claim is made that the move from "instruction" to "socialisation" has in practice endangered the learning of basic cognitive skills.

Need for Basic Skills

In many countries, compulsory education schools have in recent years come under increasing criticism for inadequate teaching of "basic skills", especially numeracy and literacy. The charge is made that "standards are falling" or less commonly that even if standards are not falling, schools fail to equip young persons with the literacy and numeracy skills required of everyone in modern industrial society. This is all the more important as the service sector grows and calls for literacy and numeracy skills to a greater extent than does much manual employment. The anxiety about standards and the accompanying calls for "back to basics" are especially strong among some employers, parents, and teachers in post-compulsory institutions. While "integration" policies tend to be identified with left-of-centre political parties and "radical" educationists, the charge that "standards are falling" tends to be identified with right-of-centre parties and "conservative" educationists. The concern about "basic skills" is strong also in those countries where schools appear to be relatively well financed, where the pupil/teacher ratio is relatively low, and where only few teachers do not possess the formal qualifications deemed appropriate for their job. Thus, such criticism is fairly widespread in the "rich" education systems of the United States, Scandinavia, Australia, Germany, Britain, and the Netherlands.

In a number of countries surveys have recently been undertaken to assess the extent to which pupils in the higher grades of compulsory schooling receive an adequate grounding in numeracy and literacy. A Swedish survey sponsored by the National Board of Education revealed in 1975 that almost one in five 16-year-olds leaves the comprehensive basic school with reading, writing, and numeracy skills only at the level of the average 13-year-old, and that a quarter of these adolescents do not exceed the skill level of the average 11-year-old. The Swedish national report states that the revision of the primary school curriculum, which is now in progress, will give increased emphasis to "fundamental basic skills". The Danish national report notes that anxiety about basic skills is widespread and that survey work has attempted to diagnose the severity of the problem. The charge of "falling standards" is also levelled in Norway and a recent issue of *Norsk Pedagogisk Tidskrift*, N° 1, 1979 (The Norwegian Journal of Pedagogy) is wholly devoted to this controversy. In England and Wales, the concern has been especially great. Partly in response to this controversy, the government established in 1975 the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) for England and Wales in order to "promote the development of methods of assessing and monitoring the achievement of children at school ; and to seek to identify the incidence of under-achievement". Belgium expresses concern about :

> "the number of secondary school leavers without any qualifications at all or any certificates of use on the labour market, even a primary education certificate (they have been able to leave their primary school for vocational secondary education on having reached the age of 13 or 14, but unable to complete their vocational training) ; the large number of national servicemen reported to be illiterate by the National Defence Department".

A major nation-wide study was undertaken in Australia in 1975 in response to a report from a select committee of the House of Representatives. The tests used were designed to "measure the attainment of skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy that were regarded as being essential for continuing with education beyond the most elementary level, and for living in Australian society"... "This study was the first national attempt at establishing a level of performance in basic literacy and numeracy for Australian children and will provide a bench mark for future measurements".

In the United States the concern about "basic skills" has induced many states to launch programmes of "minimum competency testing". A survey of this activity (Soloth, 1978), covering 26 states, shows that the granting of high school diplomas is frequently tied to adequate performance on such tests which are designed to measure basic literacy and numeracy skills.

A Core Curriculum

The back-to-basics movement is paralleled in a number of countries by advocacy of the idea of a core curriculum. There is, however, not always a clear idea of what it should constitute beyond insistence upon reading, writing, numeracy and oral communication, which may be regarded as a relatively new objective of compulsory schooling. Neither does it necessarily connote traditionalist teaching methods.

In the United Kingdom an effort has been made to identify eight broad areas of experience as the foundation of a core curriculum — aesthetic/creative, ethical, linguistic, mathematical, physical, scientific, social/political and spiritual. The problem arises at the lower secondary rather than the primary level for it is at the secondary level that decisions must be taken about the balance between general and vocational education and about reconciling the needs of those who will proceed to further study and those who will leave school at the first legal opportunity.

Formal or Informal Methods

It must be stressed at the outset that it is by no means in all OECD countries that public fears are being expressed about standards having fallen in the schools. The charge of "falling standards" tends to be linked, in fact, with an indictment of teaching methods and curricula inspired by child-centred curriculum theory. In the United States the call for "back to basics" is similarly linked with a plea for more traditional teaching methods and for reduced emphasis on "life-adjustment education" within the curriculum.

Some recent research findings have provided the critics of falling standards with arguments. Empirical studies in the United States, and research by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978) and by Ruth and Robert Soar — which together with related studies have been reviewed in a recent Norwegian paper (Drevland, 1978) — support the alleged superiority of directive teaching styles as compared with indirect, informal strategies, in the teaching of basic numeracy and literacy skills. What, though, it may be asked, of oral skills ?

Faced with the "back-to-basics" challenge, educators identified with the child-centred perspective commonly argue that informal methods are inherently superior in terms of other and equally important educational goals, such as the development of creativity, wholesome attitudes, and the pupil's self-image. In their defence they may refer to the work by Glidewell, Kantor, Smith, and Stringer (1966) who conclude that "dispersion of the teacher's social power and emotional acceptance" increased children's "moral responsibility, self-initiated work, independence of opinion, and responsibility in implementing accepted assigments". They may also refer to the research by Grannis (1978) who argues that "task engagement" — the crucial intervening variable in Rosenshine's theory — can also be effectively created by informal teaching styles, and that joint task control by teacher and learners is the most effective pedagogic strategy. It should also be mentioned that all evaluations have found a much larger variation within models and content of teaching than between them.

There is no consensus about the seriousness of "falling standards" in the countries where the phenomenon has become the subject of public debate. In England and Wales — where anxiety about basic skills was especially widespread — a report issued in the autumn of 1978 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools concludes that primary schools are generally quite successful in their teaching of basic cognitive skills. H.M. Inspectors found that high priority was given to teaching children to read, write and learn mathematics and that the basic work in the teaching of reading was undertaken systematically. The Australian national authorities argue that :

> "the 'hard' data available refute the decline theory in terms of standardized measures of specific aspects of literacy over specific periods of time with comparable populations, and in some aspects there is evidence of improvement. This is particularly evident in the more intellectual problem-solving types of skills, though not in the more mechanical skills".

But in this case the "hard data available" are admittedly patchy. In the absence of reliable time series of data on pupil achievement — and such time series seem nearly everywhere to be lacking — the opposed parties in this controversy are unable to find common criteria for assessing the trend in pupil achievement and in most OECD countries fall back on impressionistic evidence. However, in England and Wales it is possible to say, on the basis of scores by 11-year-olds in a reading test set in parallel with the inspection survey, that the results of national reading surveys conducted since 1955 are consistent with gradually improving reading standards of 11-year-olds. Nevertheless, the advocates of curriculum practices inspired by the child-centred perspective are clearly on the defensive in many countries. In public

debate on education, sometimes also in educational policy, there are signs of growing support for a more tough-minded pedagogy. In England and Wales, as well as in the United Sates, there are also attempts to make schools more accountable to outside public authorities. The "accountability" issue is for obvious reasons much less evident in national systems which are subjected to strong central control of the curriculum (see Chapter X).

Innovation and Renewal Strategies

It is tempting to look to decentralisation of curriculum control as a source of pedagogic renewal and so, in countries where central control has been strong, to replace highly specified national curriculum requirements with more general "guidelines" and to promote local widespread involvement in decision-making by setting up consultative bodies at the school level. Many countries evince a trend in this direction. In Germany, as in Sweden, Norway and Finland, curriculum documents are now less mandatory in nature, leaving greater scope than some decades ago for teacher, institutional or municipal autonomy. In Australia there is an increasing trend towards school-based curriculum development. In France, the government decided in 1973 that secondary schools should set aside 10 per cent of their annual timetable for "innovatory activity" : the schools were urged to organise activities which would be different from the normal course of study and which would involve co-operation among teachers of different subjects.

In recent decades, political attention in many OECD countries has centred on change in school structure at the lower secondary level and on the curriculum implications of such change. Extending the principle of comprehensive education to apply to higher stages of education than previously inevitably poses questions about how to define the "common curriculum" and the nature of curriculum alternatives for different groups of pupils, as well as ability grouping and forms of selection inside the extended comprehensives. Or, if parallel schools are left intact, there is the question of better co-ordination of syllabuses in the different types of institution in order to facilitate transfers of pupils after an intial "orientation" period.

Radical change of this type is inherently controversial, not only in the sense that different individuals will have different views, but groups of teachers performing different functions will face such change with different vested interests in terms of status and occupational identity. Thus, extension of comprehensive schooling meets with opposition from teachers in more selective schools who see it as a threat to their occupational identity and status. Teachers in non-selective schools tend to fear the prospect of becoming smaller fish in the bigger pond. Those trained as subject experts have vested interests and professional identities which conflict with attempts to introduce "integrated studies", and so on. Major change in school and curriculum structure is thus inherently controversial in the sense that it tends inevitably to evoke organised opposition within school, as well as organised opposition from outside groups whose vested interests are affected by the change. Therefore, change of this type will not occur spontaneousiy as a result of local initiatives from within the schools themselves. Such change is inherently "political" in the sense of requiring decision-making by political institutions if it is to be generalised throughout an education system. Examples abound : the establishment of the *scuola media* in Italy, the comprehensive school for the entire duration of compulsory education in the Scandinavian countries, France and the United Kingdom, the "orientation stage" in German lower secondary institutions, de-streaming of the Scandinavian comprehensives, racial integration of American schools, and the "community control" issue in some American inner cities.

A tradition of institutional or local autonomy resists such coercion from the centre. Central control can be a necessary lever for change of this type, but is of

course no guarantee that there will be a sufficiently strong political momentum in favour of change. In school systems where major controversies about school and curriculum structure of consequence for the entire system are still to be resolved, it is likely that the *status quo* will be reinforced by any policy of decentralisation that would reduce the authority of "outside" political authorities. Indeed, such decentralisation of decision-making might easily serve to mobilise more effectively any groups opposed to change.

On the other hand, experience in many countries has shown with increasing clarity that centrally orchestrated attempts to bring about change in the process of education itself — within the school structure and curricular parameters which are capable of being imposed on schools from the outside — tend to fall far short of their objectives. The "Planning, Research, Development and Diffusion" strategy, which has characterised the most systematic "rational" curriculum development efforts employed by central agencies, has not usually been very successful in diffusing the "best pedagogic practices" produced by the research and development work.

There are many reasons for this. Like those in other occupations, teachers are reluctant to adopt the "best practices" recommended by others, especially when adoption involves extra work — as it nearly always does — at least initially. Especially if pedagogical development work follows in the wake of structural change, which tends to mobilise groups opposed to it, there will be widespread scepticism among teachers about the soundness of pedagogic advice from centrally placed experts. Those selected or self-selected to pilot projects may grow committed to the practices they help to develop, but this does not apply to the great majority who are to be brought around in the "diffusion" or "implementation" stage. Moreover, the assumption of "a best practice" can itself be questioned. To quote Becher and Maclure (1978 : 74) :

> "In education (in contrast to products whose effectiveness can be clearly established : drugs among doctors), the effectiveness of any given approach will vary enormously from one situation to another. It cannot in any case be quickly and surely assessed."

Apart from its validity, this view tends to be part of teacher lore and militates against rapid diffusion of new practices.

School reforms which entail that classroom groups be more heterogeneous in terms of the pupil's achievements and interests are commonly said to require for their educational success a reorientation of pedagogy towards more child-centred methods such as individualisation of learning, group work and projects. It is argued that conventional class teaching is especially unsuitable in such classes. If so, one is then faced with the problem that the strategy which is best suited to bring about such school reforms (power-coercive change) is of little avail in changing teaching styles. "Authoritarian methods of curriculum development cannot be used to promote non-authoritarian classroom practice" (OECD/CERI, 1975 : 40).

Decentralisation of curriculum decisions is more easily justified as government policy if one goes along with the current teaching tradition rather than attempting any radical change in it (Becher and Maclure, 1978 : 77). The goal is then to promote in the schools a climate of critical self-evaluation and of commitment to improvement : "reflexiveness" in Stenhouse's words (1975 : 76). Curriculum decision-making centred on the school would seem to be a necessary but not sufficient condition in order for this to be fostered. Central, regional, and more local agencies would have an active part to play — along with initial teacher education and especially in-service teacher education — working with schools as units rather than with individual teachers only.

To sum up : the broader the curriculum and the more wholehearted the attempt to relate it to individual student's needs and external influences, the less it becomes

possible to apply central prescriptions. How strong is the case, then, for relying on a school-based strategy for curriculum development and how can such a decentralised strategy be reconciled with the duty of the State to ensure that each boy and girl arrives at the end of compulsory schooling having acquired an adequate grounding in numeracy and literacy ? Does the solution lie in centrally controlled testing ?

Public education authorities require hard data about pupil achievement in order to deal with allegations of falling standards. Do these allegations have any validity or are they based on mere impressions, as some evidence seems to indicate ? It would seem desirable hereafter for the authorities to devise ways and means of assessing whether school achievement matches the needs of the day and whether it is as good as possible given the resources available.

VI

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND SPECIAL GROUPS

The Pursuit of Equality

Every OECD country subscribes to the principle that all children should enjoy equality of educational opportunity regardless of such individual ascriptive characteristics as socio-economic background, native tongue, ethnicity, sex, home locality and mental or physical disablement.

It is one thing to hold this principle and quite another to translate it into practice. Most countries have now been striving to provide equal educational opportunities for two decades. Indeed, a few of them have set their sights on the further target of equality of achievement or results. In the event, however, the measures adopted to promote equality have not been effective or, at least, not as effective as had been hoped. Critics point to the alleged failure of certain much publicised strategies to reduce social and economic disparities. Some of them even claim that the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged may well have widened rather than narrowed. Left-wing critics argue that despite the egalitarian rhetoric schools remain black boxes expressly designed to perpetuate the social division of labour and to sustain the capitalist system. For their part, right-wing critics charge that not only have egalitarian policies failed but that overall educational standards have fallen precisely because of ill-conceived attempts to level the school system. Some experts in the bio-social field adduce evidence to show that the genetic factor inevitably produces wide differences in educational attainment.

The gap between egalitarian aspirations and real outcomes is illustrated in Graph IV. There it is shown that pupils whose parents belong to the higher bands of socio-economic classifications are strongly represented in schools, or in classes within schools, where good opportunities exist for access into upper secondary education and thence into post-secondary education. By contrast pupils whose parents belong to the lower bands are conspicuously under-represented in such schools and classes. Moreover, many of them perform badly and leave school as soon as they possibly can, sometimes even before the statutory leaving age is reached. This same contrast was pointed out a decade ago in a report on Educational Policies for the 1970s (OECD, 1971 : 14) :

> "The typical history of educational expansion in the 1950s and the 1960s for the OECD countries can be represented by a graph of inequality of attainment between... social categories which has shifted markedly upwards without changing its slope. In other words, relative chances have not altered materially despite expansion."

Equality of opportunity is certainly a slippery concept. Applied to education it means opportunity to develop one's potential to the fullest possible extent. Even under "optimal" school conditions (and all countries are far from realising such

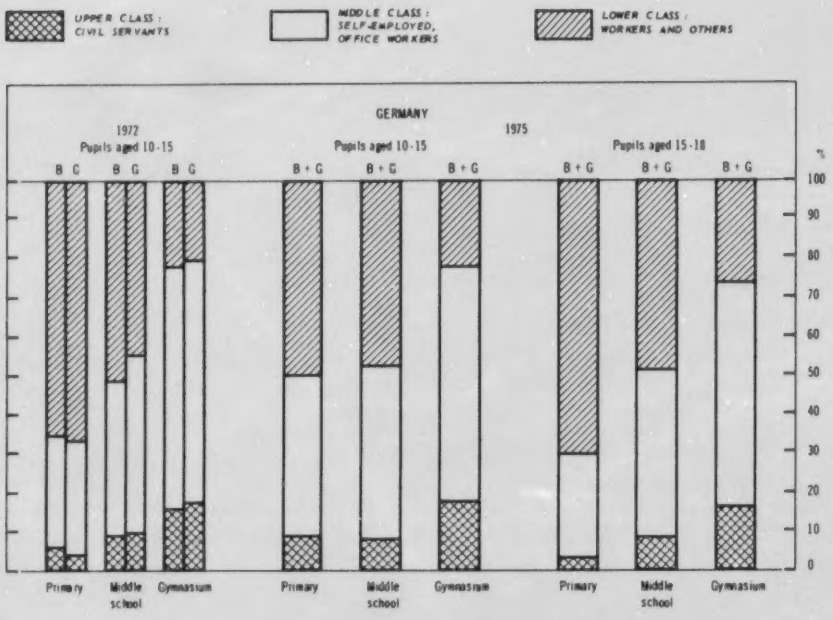
conditions), there would presumably be *individual* differences in types and amount of achievement, reflecting differences in "potential" however that be conceived. Furthermore, since "opportunity" is conceptually distinct from "making use of opportunity", *group* differences in types and amount of scholastic achievement will mirror not only the opportunity structure but also how attractive the opportunities offered by schooling are to different groups. Nevertheless, the yardstick commonly used for measuring the extent to which "equality of opportunity" has been realised tends to be the extent to which various groups (in terms of important criteria for ascribed status) participate and achieve equally in the school system. Moreover, attention is typically focused on achievement in the most prestigious forms of schooling (traditional subjects, qualification for university entry, etc.) which lead towards the most impressive economic rewards in adult life. Research findings over some decades on such achievement rates tend to show strikingly persistent inequality and only modest egalitarian gains. This remains a major challenge to educational policy but also a major barrier to its implementation.

Differences in educational attainment may be largely due to factors external to the schools. Jencks (1972 : 255-6) has argued, for example, that there are three reasons why the schools cannot significantly contribute to reducing social inequality :

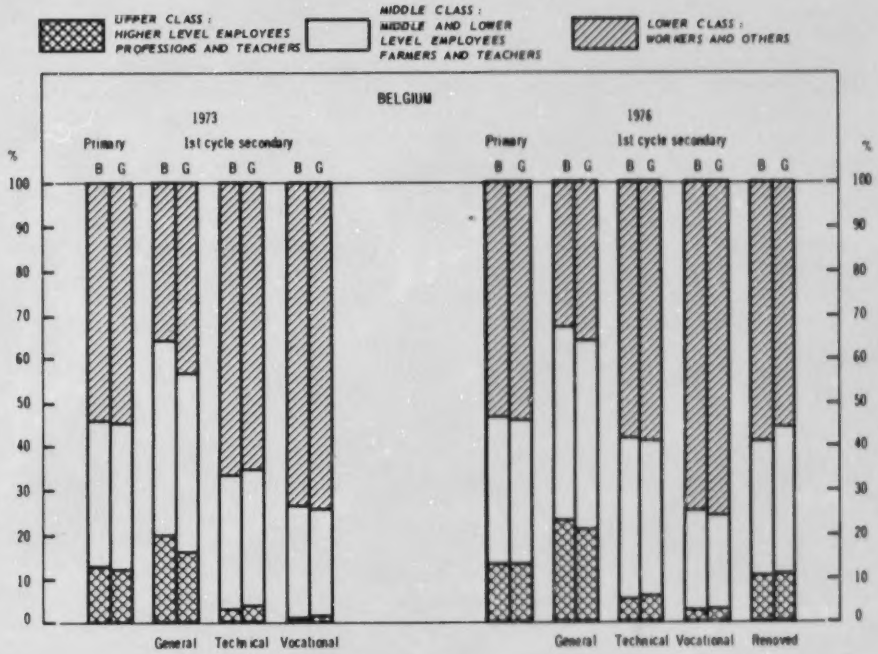
> "First, children seem to be far more influenced by what happens at home than by what happens in school. They may also be more influenced by what happens on the streets and by what they see on television. Second, reformers have very little control over those aspects of school life that affect children. Reallocating resources, reassigning pupils, and rewriting the curriculum seldom change the

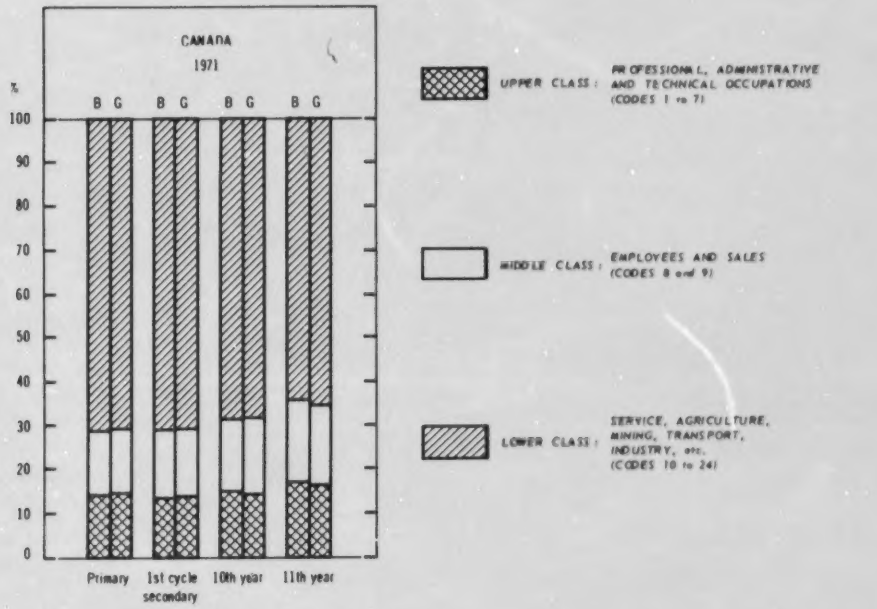
Graph IV

DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORIGIN



Graph IV (cont.)





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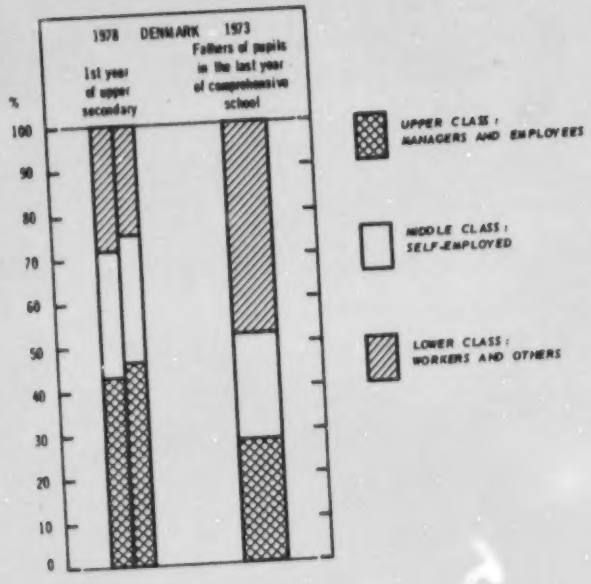

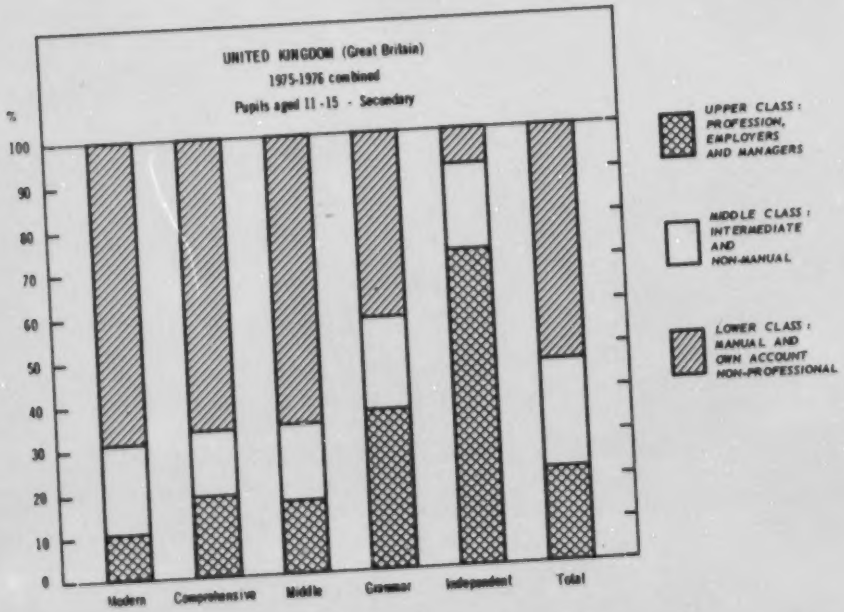

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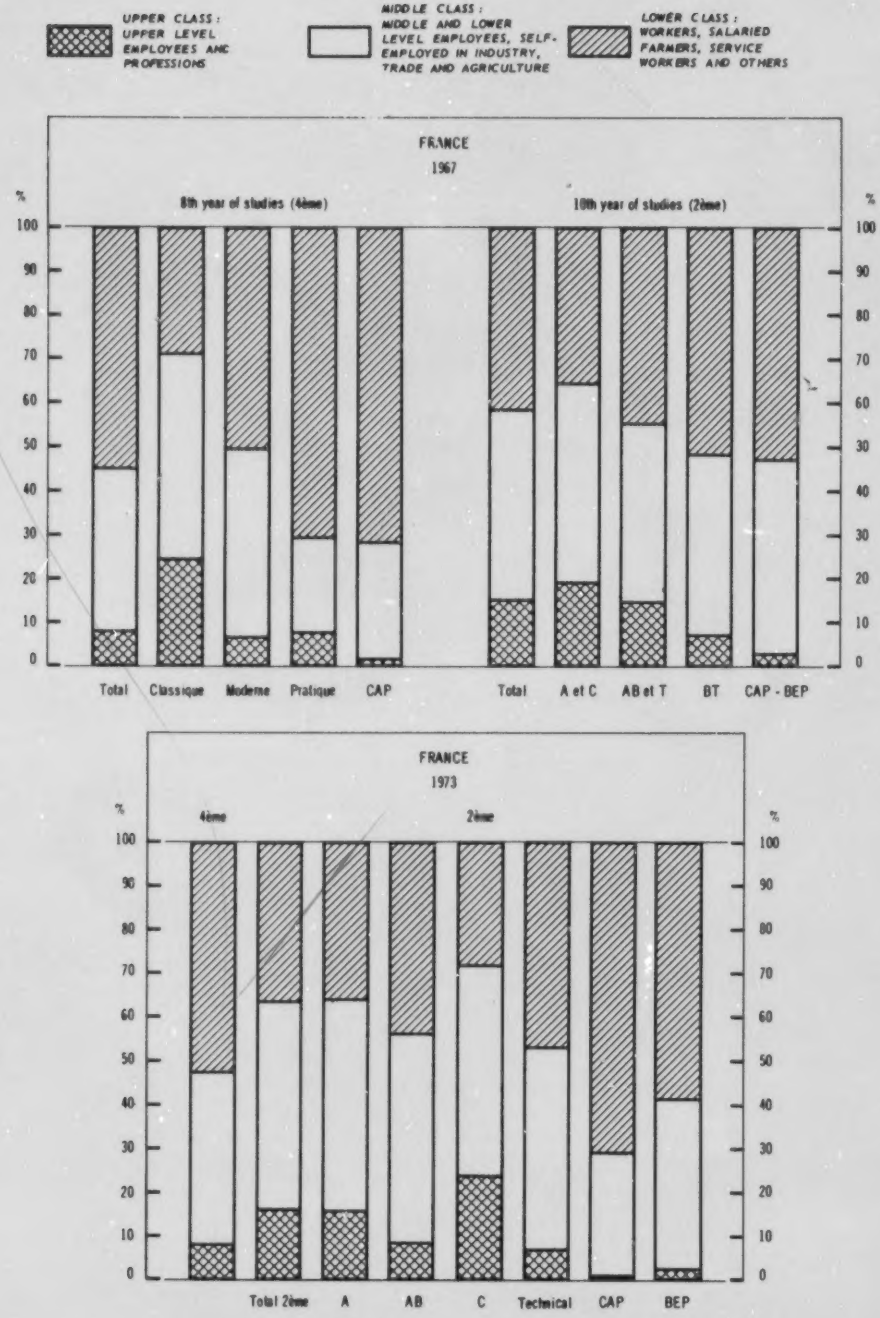
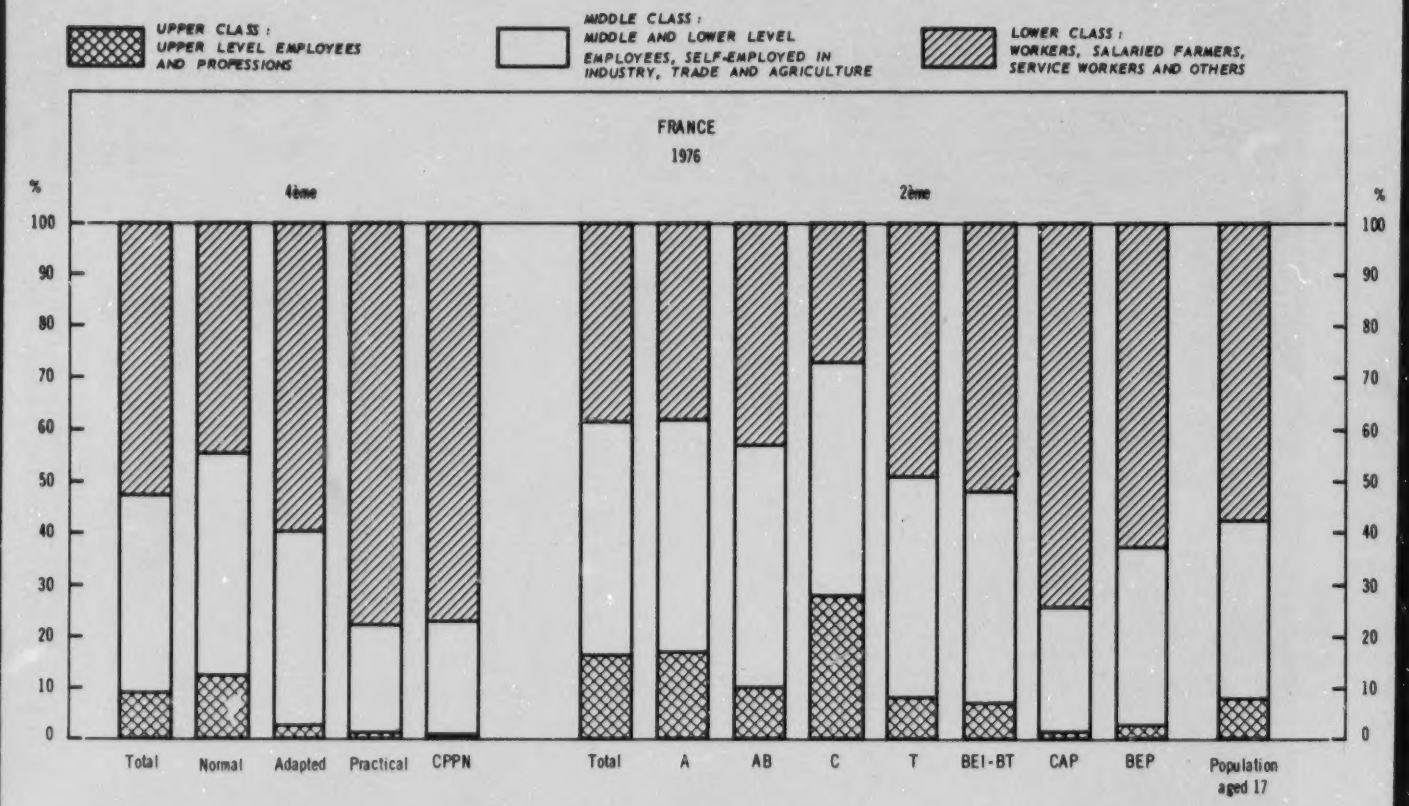
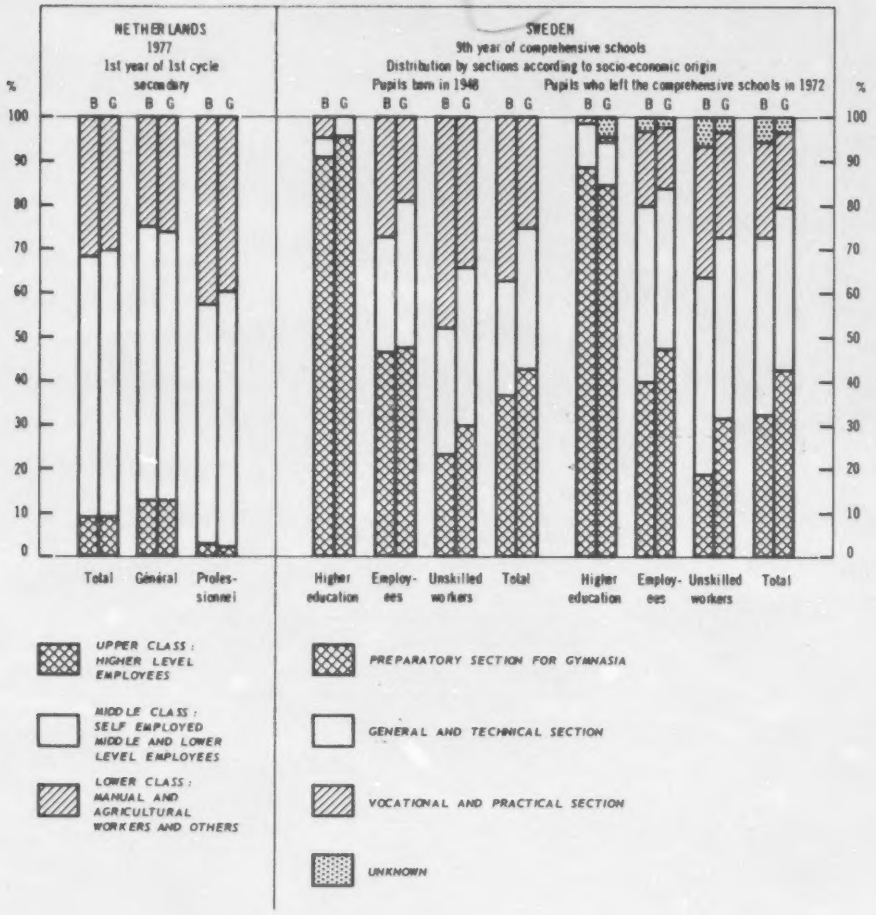


Graph IV (cont.)



Graph IV (cont.)



Source : National statistics.

way teachers and students actually treat each other minute by minute. Third, even when a school exerts an unusual influence on children, the resulting changes are not very likely to persist into adulthood."

In Sweden, a country which is famous for its devotion to social justice, the powerful influence of home has resisted the schools' best efforts to realise equality.

"Above all it is the social home background, which in interplay with free choice has retained its grip on the distribution of different educational alternatives, that has made the outcome resemble that which would have arisen from selection. Pupils from homes with parents of lower educational attainments increased their frequency of study-preparing choices, but still continued to adapt more of their choices to the success they enjoyed during the first school years so that a connection between qualifications and choice was

preserved. Pupils from academic homes in particular tended to choose theoretical alternatives even when their marks and ability levels were such that they would have been unable to make further progress in a selection system."

Radical critics argue, as already pointed out, that schools are governed by implicit values which automatically militate against the achievement of the great mass of disadvantaged children. The Danish report, for example, refers to the view of a minority of dissentients to a recent major report on the future of the nation's educational policy :

> "that the objectives of Folkeskolen (the compulsory school) have been formulated on middle class assumptions whereas working class pupils in the Folkeskolen are not offered the opportunity to develop their own language, their own behaviour and their own image of society but rather a resocialisation".

Still, public education authorities insist that their egalitarian policies have been more successful than their critics will allow. For example, a lasting effects study of the experience of children passing through the Head Start programme in the United States has belied the initial pessimism which was based on a short-term evaluation of the programme's impact. And despite its awareness of the influence of the home, Sweden sees hope in the new flexibility of the secondary school :

> "In looking back on these anything but successful levelling-out experiments, one might ask whether the curriculum revisers have not become overly fixed on those irregularities in the pupils' choices which correlate with home background and sex. These were more important to bear in mind during the initial phases of the reform period, since the choices made in primary school were then highly crucial for the longer-term choice of education and career. Today, the secondary school is open in quite another degree to pupils with different preparations, and this school in its turn opens ways into higher education and recurrent education which did not exist earlier."

Education authorities are certainly entitled to ask what policies their critics would initiate that have not been initiated already. For the effort to deal with educational inequality in many countries has been massive and determined and often boldly experimental.

Egalitarian policies

Across the board in OECD countries two interrelated policies designed to eliminate inequality can be discerned : *(a)* to integrate pupils in the schools regardless of their varying abilities and group characteristics ; *(b)* to provide earmarked funds so that special assistance can be given to disadvantaged schools and individuals.

Integration policies and problems

The first egalitarian policy, "integration", includes such measures as the following : redrawing catchment area boundaries to ensure a better mix of pupils from different groups — supplemented by busing of pupils to promote integration ; introducing co-education and making the same curriculum options available to both sexes, extending mixed-ability teaching, and integrating disabled children into "normal" schools and classrooms. Above all, the historical rise of the common school and the abolition of sharply distinct "academic" and "non-academic" sections and streams within it, are paramount examples of "integration" as a response to the problem of inequality of educational opportunity. The underlying assumption is that by being taught together persons from different ascriptive groups

will develop more supportive attitudes towards one another, and that "disadvantaged" groups will improve their educational life chances without detriment to the cognitive achievement of "advantaged" groups.

Apart from extending the common school, many illustrations of "integration" policies are cited in the national reports. The Australian one notes : a "general movement away from streamed (graded) classes" ; the fact that "schools generally seek to cater for the full range of learning abilities within each classroom by small group methods, particularly in relation to basic skill subjects" ; "increased moves to provide further integration of handicapped children into normal classrooms, especially in some states", and "variations in this practice which reflect historical differences in approach" concerning the merits of integration versus separate provision. The report of the United States observes a trend away from ability streaming (tracking) in the primary schools, and draws attention to the Education for all Handicapped Children Act which requires the states to provide a free, appropriate public education for all physically and mentally handicapped children, "such education to be provided in the least restrictive environment, namely, mainstreaming in regular classrooms".

The Swedish report gives an account of how policy has changed in recent decades in response to patterns of social class inequality and sex bias which persist when pupils are given a free choice of the curriculum alternatives offered within the comprehensive school. The report argues that such patterns of inequality are not greatly altered when selection is replaced by a free choice of options.

Streaming or mixed ability grouping

The arguments for and against streaming have been well rehearsed. On the one hand, it is claimed that it is socially divisive, that it reduces the motivation, self-confidence, and learning of pupils placed in the inferior streams, that the ability criteria used to place pupils in streams are not sufficiently valid, that conventional class teaching as well as individualised instruction and activity methods are more effective when classes are relatively homogeneous in respect of ability and previous attainment. On the other hand, that the more able pupils are "held back" when mixed-ability teaching is practised, and that especially in linear or sequential subjects such as mathematics or foreign languages, mixed-ability grouping presents special problems. It is interesting to note, however, that while the arguments concerning *further* "destreaming" are similar in different countries, they are concerned with vastly different degrees of "integration" in this respect.

There is therefore a considerable element of relativism as to when mixed-ability teaching is seen as posing a severe pedagogical problem. This is not to say that countries pursuing the most radical form of integration (e.g. Norway) have adequately solved the pedagogic problems of mixed-ability teaching ; but there are at least considerable international differences in what most teachers and schools have learned to live with.

The recommended pedagogic response to increasingly heterogeneous classes is teaching strategies rooted in a child-centred curriculum perspective : individualised learning, group work, projects — with the teacher becoming less of a didactic instructor and more of a resource person and organiser. Yet it is apparent that in the countries where the integration thrust has been particularly radical, many teachers have little faith in the practicality of such methods, particularly in the secondary schools. Teachers tend to argue that such methods are more suitable for homogeneous than for heterogeneous classes, and that the methods not only require special competencies but also more motivated pupils, smaller classes, and a more generous supply of differentiated learning materials than is commonly found in the schools. Obviously, it is uncertain how far teaching methods in the long run will

change in this direction, but there is good reason to believe that any reform strategy that sees teachers simply as persons to be cajoled to accept and practise what centrally placed "experts" see as the "one best solution" will founder (see Chapter X).

There is a possibility that the pedagogic style which is said to be appropriate to heterogeneous classes will in effect increase the achievement lead of pupils from advantaged backgrounds. A child-centred pedagogy places a greater premium on each child's resources and motivation. When direct teacher control is relaxed, the children most likely to benefit from such a shift in pedagogy are those who are already well motivated for school work, who function well on their own, and who are articulate in group situations. For this reason, it is sometimes argued that child-centred "informal" methods tend to favour children from middle-class homes more than conventional class teaching. Eggleston (1977 : 83-84), writing about British and American trends, has suggested that discovery methods, supportive rather than directive teacher behaviour, emphasis on autonomous learning in groups or individually, tend to be conceptualised against middle-class norms so that children from middle-class homes profit most from such methods. Bernstein (1977) would add the qualification that there may be generational differences within the middle-class in some countries, and that informal methods (in his terms : "invisible pedagogy") accord with the values and life style of the new middle class but not with those of the old one. The view that informal methods inherently give added advantage to already privileged children is echoed by the Danish authorities.

> "Some teachers believe that change in their part in school offers a wider scope for learning, personal development, and social education for those pupils who are best equipped intellectually, and who have the best social background, but that it offers less opportunities for the less fortunate pupils — in fact exactly the opposite of the intentions of the educational reforms."

Research on this important question is extremely sparse. The evaluation of the IMU project in Sweden (IMU = individualised mathematics teaching) concluded, however, that the least able and least motivated pupils fell further behind others when a materials-methods system was introduced in order to individualise learning and to change the role of the teacher from that of instructor to that of resource person and organiser. The importance that policy in many countries attaches to "integration" as an egalitarian lever indicates that a high priority should be given to research on the educational consequences of the pedagogy which certain forms of "integration" are said to require. It could be that certain aspects of that pedagogy are counterproductive in terms of egalitarian criteria.

The question of subject integration is arguably also related to the problem of equality of educational opportunity. Some critics see the subject-divided school, with its tendency to define worthwhile knowledge as greatly abstracted from real life situation of direct concern to pupils, as intrinsically alien to working-class culture but sustained by a well-developed separate educational culture among middle-class families. This view is rarely reflected in policy or official recommendations. It is, however, expressed by a minority of the Committee that produced the U-90 Report (Central Council of Education, 1978). According to this minority, working-class children, unlike middle-class children, are exposed to resocialisation in school, and reject the subject-divided curriculum as alien and irrelevant. What working-class children need are integrated studies focused on problems of direct concern to them in their out-of-school life. Against this view, it can be argued that there is little reason to expect the advantage of middle-class children to be reduced if curricula are changed in this way. Their advantage could even be enhanced if schools officially reduce emphasis on the type of knowledge which in the end is convertible into high-level competence and qualifications.

Compensatory Programmes for Disadvantaged Groups

Remedial instruction

Of these programmes there are many examples. In the United States there is the Head Start Program for very young children, which exists in about one school district out of four, is partly financed out of federal funds, and is intended primarily for children from poor families. There is also the vast programme covering mainly the first three to six years of schooling which operates under title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary School Act, besides a variety of special programmes for bilingual children and others. In many other OECD countries (as in Australia and Sweden) the central government allocates extra resources to schools which, according to various criteria, contain a high proportion of socio-economically deprived pupils.

In implementing compensatory programmes education authorities are confronted with a dilemma. In order to help disadvantaged children to become equal, they must provide remedial instruction. Yet remedial instruction is apt to reinforce status inequalities. For example, remedial instruction is the main arm of the whole compensatory education effort in the United States where it is often equated with the mechanical device of "pulling out". A team of OECD examiners which recently completed a review of federal educational policies for the disadvantaged took issue against the practice on the grounds that is strengthens rather than diminishes social divisions. Yet it is far from easy to give slow learners the assistance they need when they sit in mainstream classes.

The dilemma may never be amenable to a full resolution. It would become less challenging, however, if the stigma and disincentive of failure could be removed or, as many educationists prefer, if the concept of success could be broadened. In the words of the Belgian report : "the education system should allow individuals to progress on the basis of each success instead of selecting them on the basis of their failures".

Repeating classes

Whatever their views on the merits and demerits of remedial instruction, most countries are now opposed to "repeating", the practice which requires slow learners to spend a second year in the same class if they fail to attain a minimum standard. The consequence of this practice is that pupils who fail at the end of more than one year find themselves at the age of fifteen or sixteen sitting in a classroom with much younger children and having no prospect of completing the full compulsory cycle of study.

The rates of repeating vary considerably from one country to another as shown in Graph V. Moreover, the phenomenon mostly affects pupils belonging to the lower socio-economic groups. For example, in Belgium, the proportion of repeaters in the first year of primary schooling in 1976 was seven times greater for the children of unskilled workers than for those of managerial staff.

Policies of separate provision, or a discriminatory treatment of disadvantaged pupils, therefore carry the danger of reinforcing status inequalities and widening the learning gap between distinctive groups in society. Nevertheless, national authorities have no choice but to adopt specific policies for specific groups.

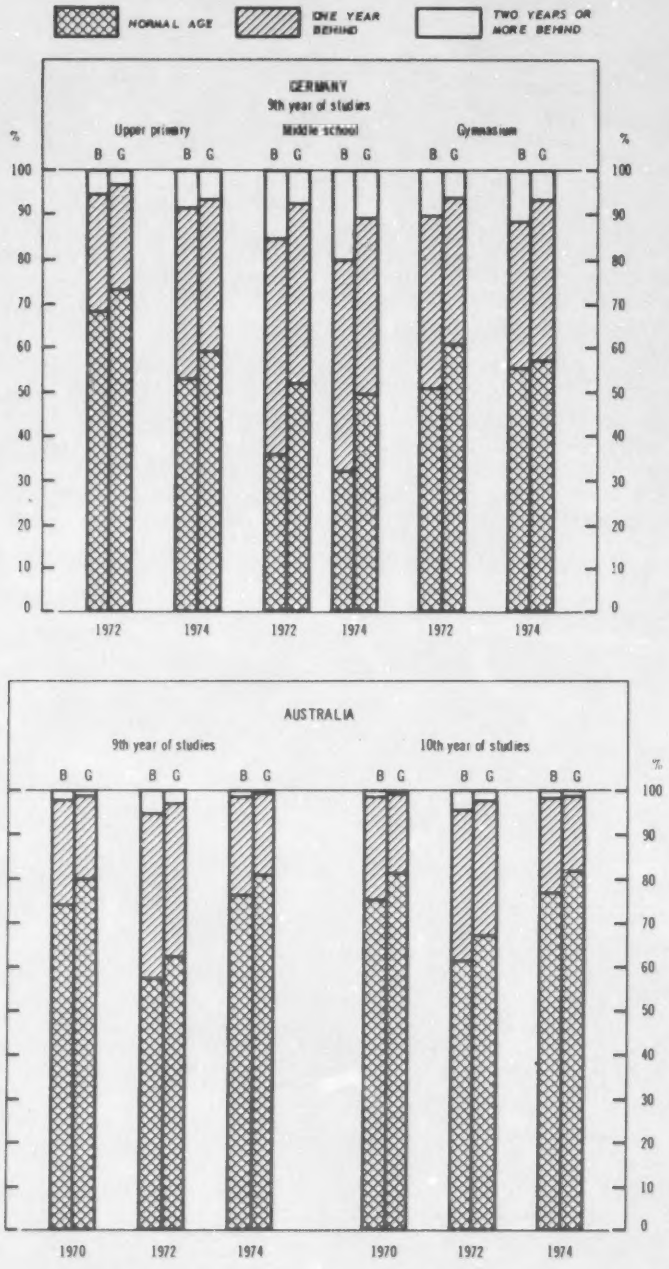
The education of children with handicaps [1]

Since the 1960s there has been a trend in many countries to educate children with handicaps within ordinary schools. New educational legislation in Scandinavia,

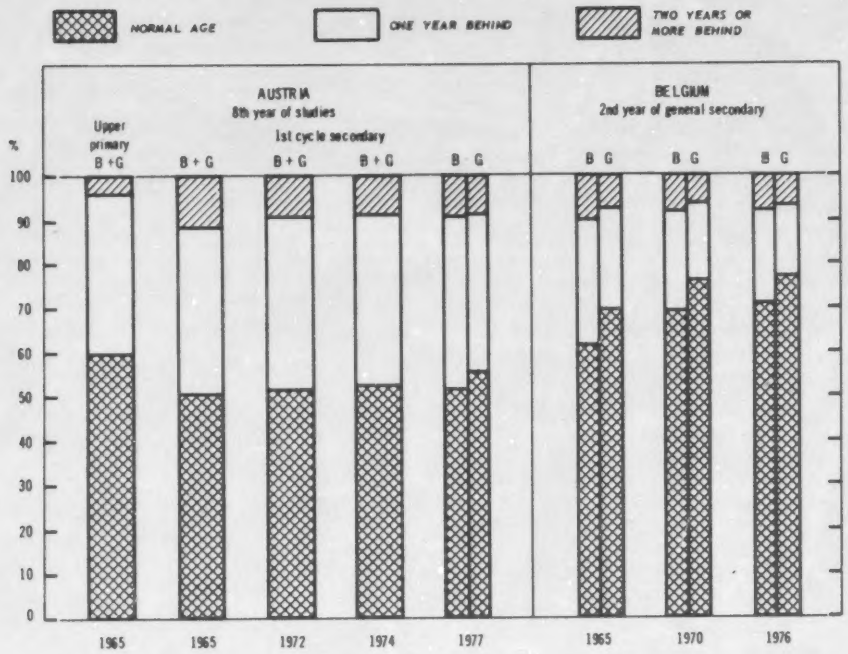
1 Country policies and practices are being investigated in detail under a CERI project on "Education of the Handicapped".

Graph V

DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS IN THE LAST YEAR OF COMPULSORY SCHOOLING (OR IN AN APPROXIMATE YEAR) BY NORMAL AGE, ONE YEAR AND TWO YEARS OR MORE BEHIND



Graph V (cont.)


NORMAL AGE
ONE YEAR BEHIND
TWO YEARS OR MORE BEHIND
AUSTRIA
8th year of studies
Upper primary
1st cycle secondary
2nd year of general secondary
B + G
B G
%
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
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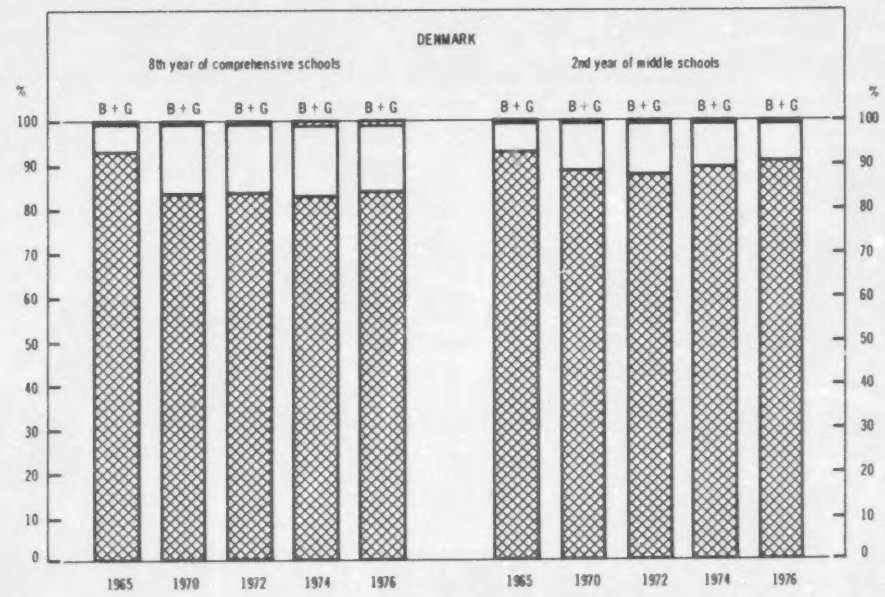
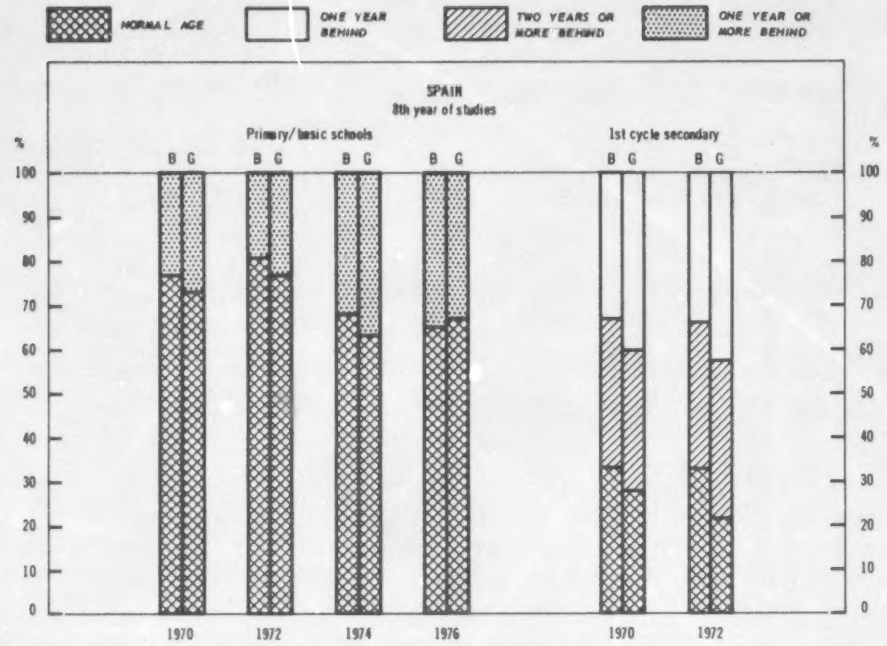
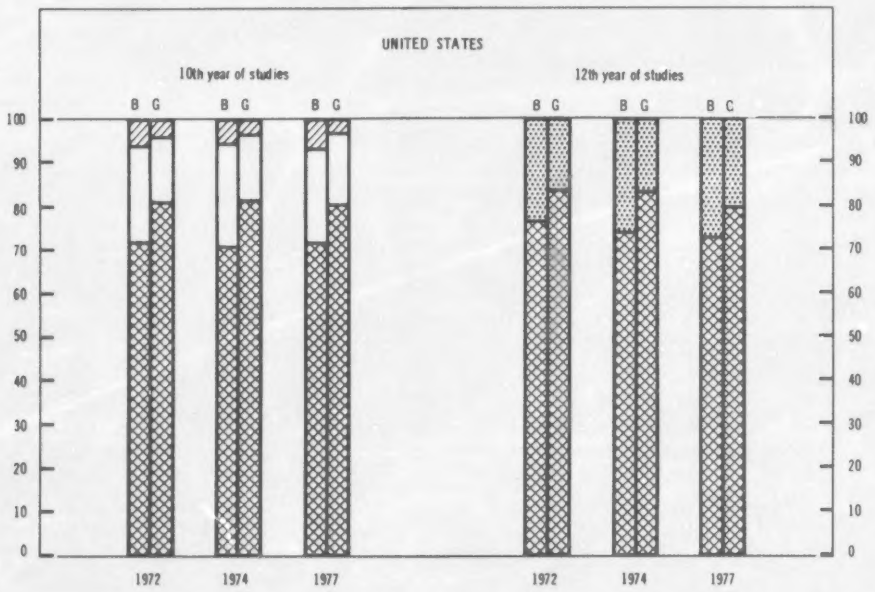
1974
1977
1965
1970
1976


DENMARK
8th year of comprehensive schools
2nd year of middle schools
B + G
%
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1965
1970
1972
1974
1976
1965
1970
1972
1974
1976

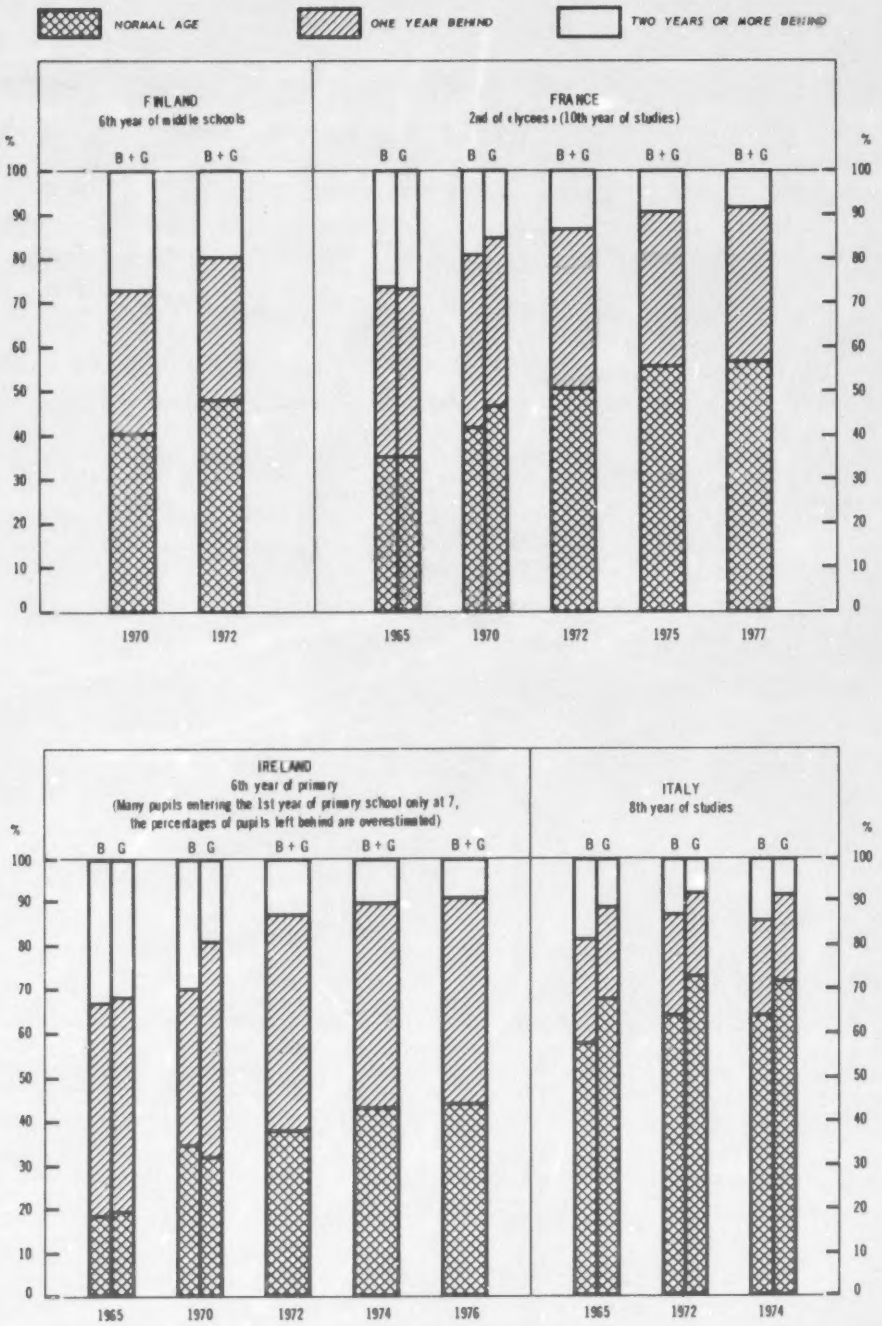
Graph V (cont.)



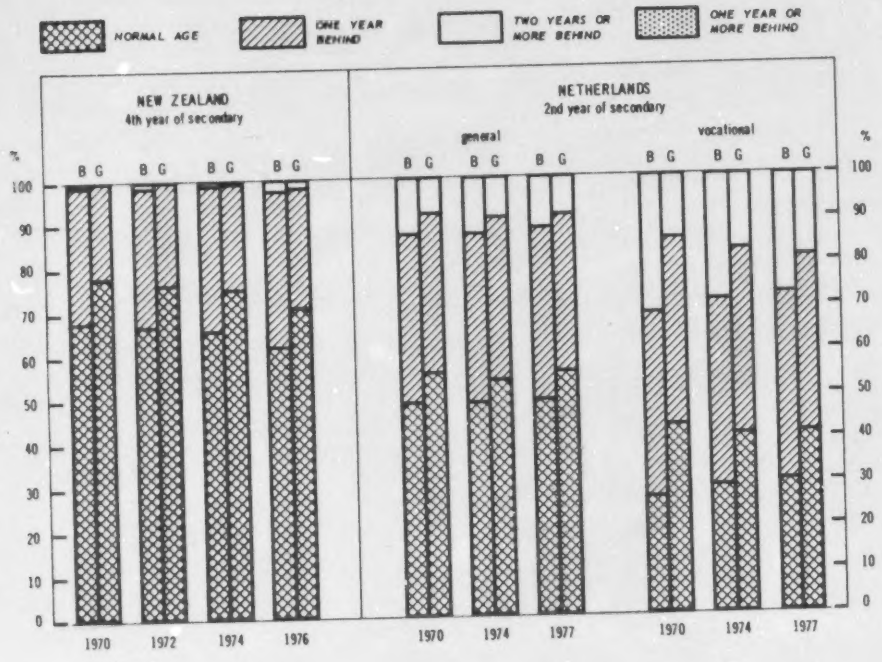
1. Pupils may enter the 1st year of secondary school after 4 years of primary education but many of them enter after 5 years or more, which explains the high percentages of pupils left behind. Since the 1970 reform, the general basic education centers have replaced the two cycles of primary education and the 1st cycle of secondary education.

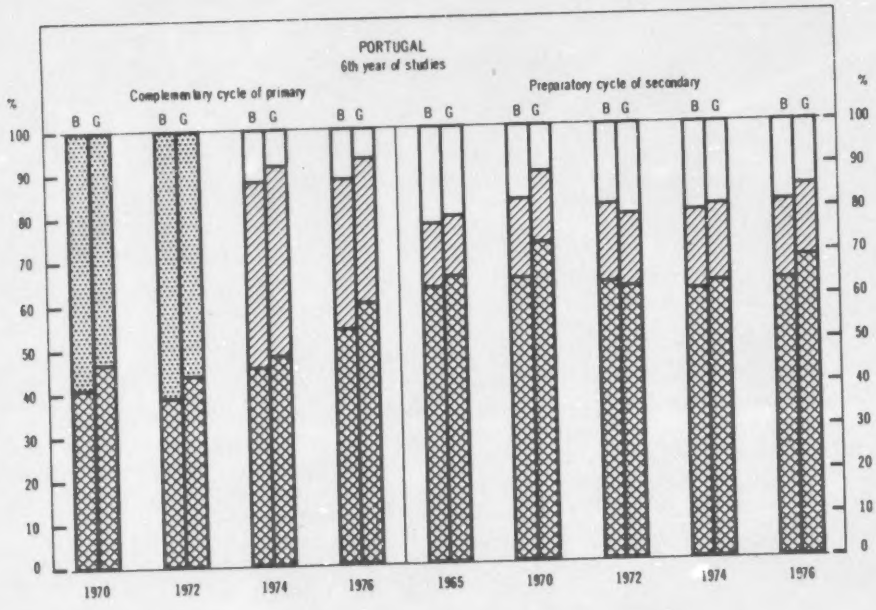


Graph V (cont.)

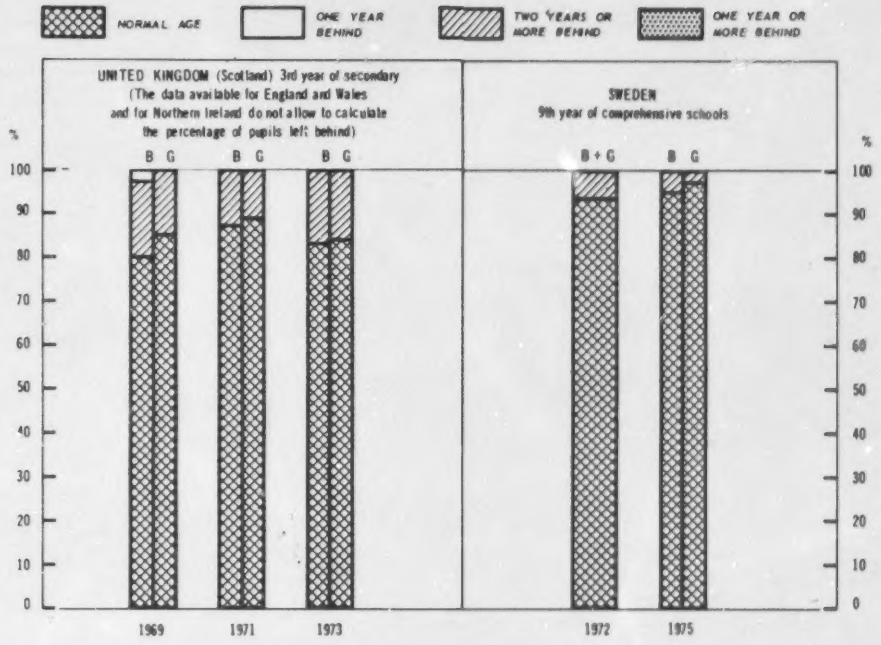

NORMAL AGE
ONE YEAR BEHIND
TWO YEARS OR MORE BEHIND
FINLAND
6th year of middle schools
FRANCE
2nd of «lycees» (10th year of studies)
IRELAND
6th year of primary
(Many pupils entering the 1st year of primary school only at 7, the percentages of pupils left behind are overestimated)
ITALY
8th year of studies
B + G
B G
%
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1970
1972
1965
1975
1977
1974
1976

Graph V (cont.)


NORMAL AGE
ONE YEAR BEHIND
TWO YEARS OR MORE BEHIND
ONE YEAR OR MORE BEHIND
NEW ZEALAND
4th year of secondary
NETHERLANDS
2nd year of secondary
general
vocational
%
B G
1970
1972
1974
1976
1977


PORTUGAL
6th year of studies
Complementary cycle of primary
Preparatory cycle of secondary
%
B G
1965
1970
1972
1974
1976

Graph V (cont.)



Source : National statistics.

Italy and the United States is an expression of this trend. However, in other countries children with handicaps are educated in separate special schools.

The integration approach is rooted in the belief that those with handicaps have the same rights as others, including access to all the opportunities in the community. By being educated in ordinary schools and in ordinary classrooms they are helped to adapt to normal circumstances and at the same time other students learn to accept and work with them. It is argued that to place children with handicaps in separate special schools reinforces their sense of isolation and increases the social handicaps of their disabilities.

The case for separate special schools is that the children concerned need particular care, very special facilities and methods and concentrated health social services. It is thought that these can only be provided economically in special schools.

Many countries are now adopting the principle that there is no clear distinction between handicapped and non-handicapped children, but rather there is a continuum of special educational needs which includes the learning and behaviour difficulties commonly found in ordinary schools. The important principle is to define a child's educational needs and not provide for him according to a category of handicap. Special education therefore involves services within and to ordinary schools as well as special schools. The trend in some countries has been to provide for almost all children with handicaps, however severe and profound, within ordinary schools. In others, the balance between provision in ordinary and special schools is changing with more provision being made in ordinary schools.

Additional resources are needed for integration. For the physically disabled buildings may need to be adapted, although for most other children with special educational needs ordinary classrooms with additional equipment will suffice. Ordinary schools need the services of visiting specialists and therapists and new patterns of working require an in-service training programme for all the personnel concerned. A number of countries have made a commitment to integration including allocation of the requisite resources. In Norway, for example, the authorities have fully accepted :

> "the consequences of the fact that special schools have costs per pupil which are many times that of pupils in ordinary schools. When pupils are 'integrated' corresponding resources will follow the child into the ordinary school, and the extra costs are fully borne by the government. This inevitably leads to the temptation to widen the concept of handicap, thus increasing the number of pupils entitled to additional resources from government. The substantial appropriations in recent years for the integration of handicapped children in ordinary schools have thus to a considerable extent gone into improved teaching for pupils who might previously not have been defined as sufficiently handicapped to go to special schools."

Denmark has also devoted an extraordinary high level of resources to integrating the physically and mentally handicapped.

The integration of children with handicaps in ordinary schools is greatly influenced by the way such schools are organised. The extent to which schools differentiate and individualise their curriculum and methodology and the flexibility of their programmes are important factors. Integration has progressed furthest in those countries with common comprehensive schools, with mixed-ability teaching and where the class teacher is responsible for most of the timetable.

Within the context of equal opportunities and special groups, children with handicaps are a particular case. They are not members of a group with identifiable criteria since they include the whole span of ability and whole range of social classes. Although some of them may have a particular disability in common, its handicapping effect will vary markedly according to the individual and the circumstances in which he lives and learns. The degree to which the compulsory school system is responsive to children with handicaps is therefore the degree to which it caters for individuals.

Cultural diversity and ethnic minorities

For practical reasons any country must strike a balance between separate provision and integration for culturally or linguistically distinct ethnic minorities and immigrant children. Questions arise not only regarding methods but educational values and objectives. To what extent should a minority child's own culture be respected ? Should special studies be provided on top of the normal timetable, or if not, at what subject's expense ? Occasionally, deeply felt values among a minority group will conflict head-on with those of the school. Should the Amish in the United States or reluctant nomads be forced to send their children to school when they see the institution of school as a threat to their way of life ? How far should one respect the deep concern of many Muslim immigrants to preserve their children's modesty in a country where there is co-education and obligatory physical education ? Should religious minority groups be required to attend school on important religious holidays ? These scattered examples suffice to demonstrate that there is often a dilemma between the goal of respecting native culture and that of integrating a minority child into mainstream social life.

An age has effectively begun when OECD countries which have traditionally striven to promote cultural homogeneity — a common language and common values

— now see virtue in cultural diversity. This perception is partially enforced by the virtue of necessity for the economic expansion of the post-Second World War years had led to a mass movement of migrant workers across national boundaries. Take as illustrations the extraordinary growth of the Hispanic population in a large country, the United Stages, the high percentage of migrant workers in a small country such as Switzerland, and the polyglot composition of a medium-sized country like Yugoslavia. For the United States there can be no question of instantly americanising the vast numbers of Hispanic immigrants in the way that earlier waves of immigrants were americanised before the First World War.

But it is far from out of necessity alone that the United States and other countries have now embarked upon a policy of cultural diversity in education. It is above all because it is the most effective way of helping children to learn to some purpose. In the United States Congress passed a Bilingual Education Act in 1974 which recognizes :

i) that there are large numbers of children of limited English proficiency ;
ii) that many of such children have a cultural heritage which differs from that of English-speaking persons ;
iii) that a primary means by which a child learns is through the use of such a child's language and cultural heritage ;
iv) that, therefore, large numbers of children of limited English proficiency have educational needs which can be met by the use of bilingual educational methods and techniques ; and
v) that, in addition, children of limited English proficiency... benefit through the fullest utilization of multiple language and cultural resources...

On closer scrutiny, any nation is to a greater or lesser degree culturally subdivided. Compulsory schooling has always been an instrument of cultural homogeneity, on terms defined by influential social groups. Today there appears in many OECD countries to be a greater official appreciation of cultural pluralism. How far should such pluralism be reflected in what schools teach and who should define that content ? How far should a teacher in a working-class district be free to stress the value of class solidarity as against social mobility and to be in his teaching a spokesman for those parents who might see the struggle against the alleged class enemy as the main theme in local history ? How far should a community of strongly Pietist parents be free to decide that their school curriculum should stay clear of drama or dance as art forms (to say nothing of sex education) ?

Questions of curriculum content (including the "hidden" curriculum which is discussed below) are fundamentally questions of values. To the extent that a country shares a common culture, there will be a relatively unproblematic core of near-consensual values. But in a culturally pluralistic country the aim of equal educational opportunity poses the question of opportunity to learn what ? To enter mainstream culture or to pursue the values of one's group — which will sometimes conflict with mainstream culture and social mobility goals. There is no easy solution to this dilemma, and the policies adopted often reflect more the size, concentration, cultural self-confidence, and political clout of a cultural group rather than any ready-made benign principle.

Two aspects of the minority problem are specifically significant for policy-makers. The first is that in several countries a sharp distinction has to be drawn between indigenous or second- and third-generation minorities and newly-arrived groups. The second is that minorities often tend to concentrate, sometimes heavily, in specific areas and this in turn leads to a dominant or at least substantial enrolment of minority children in certain schools. The risk of their being cut off from the mainstream culture is obvious and can only be averted through skilful, patient and yet bold measures, such as the resort to busing in the United States.

Rural and Urban Inequalities

Rural

Many OECD countries are preoccupied with the problems and potential of rural schooling. The reasons for this preoccupation may vary both within and among countries but they often flow from larger concerns about balanced economic growth and rural development ; a new appreciation of the cultural pluralism which we have just discussed ; scepticism about the efficacy of large schools and urban models of education ; the discovery that the "progressive" metropolitan school is often using time-honoured rurul school approaches (e.g. individualised instruction ; mixed age groups ; peer learning ; relying upon the community as a learning resource).

Still, the main impetus has come from a concern for equity. Many countries continue to face the problem of more or less blatant disparities in educational provision and individual achievement as between urban and rural areas. This is tantamount to subjecting children to an inferior education simply because of *where* they happen to live and is as inequitable as social, racial or religious discrimination.

Some rural schools are conspicuously successful in teaching basic skills. Many rural schools, however, have such difficulties to overcome as lack of access to specialised resources and services ; the problem of attracting and retaining good teachers ; economic disadvantages ; logistical needs caused by geographical isolation and a wide dispersion of population. All of these call for special measures explicitly designed to reduce or remove the educational disadvantage of living in a sparsely populated area.

A considerable number of OECD countries have adopted special measures to assist rural education. The authorities in Turkey, for example, where 64 per cent of the population still live in the countryside, have decided that wherever villages have a population of less than 250 or wherever villages having a greater population than that lack resources, it will be the policy to set up centrally located schools on either a residential or non-residential basis. Other countries recognize that there may have to be *positive discrimination* in favour of the less privileged regions, provinces, localities, areas and centres.

Portugal has designed a system of instructional television at the lower secondary level. New Zealand has developed a system of correspondence education to serve educational needs from pre-primary schooling to in-service teacher training. Distance education by correspondence and radio is available throughout Australia ; Western Australia has recently implemented "an Isolated Students' Matriculation Scheme" which allows young people living in the "outback" to complete their entire secondary education without having to board in distant towns.

Scotland has developed in-service training programmes and support services for teachers in small rural schools. Finland is experimenting with new types of team teaching in one-, two- and three-teacher schools. France has launched programmes linking together groups of villages for mutual support and shared services (Sher, 1980).

Urban

Pronounced disparities in student success rates between rural and urban areas are paralleled by similarly pronounced disparities within urban areas. For example, in Nice (France) in 1972, 85 per cent of the sixteen-year age group was attending school, of which 41 per cent were in the 11th year, whereas in Amiens the rates were 59 per cent and 22 per cent respectively. Disparities may be but are not necessarily caused by inadequate provision, for many countries try not only to ensure that resources are equitably shared among all schools but that particularly disadvantaged

schools receive additional resources. They are very largely due to the character of the social and economic environment of the school.

Almost 75 per cent of the total population in the OECD group of countries now inhabit urban areas and many of these are densely concentrated in the inner cities. Even in wealthy conurbations, poor neighbourhoods, whether in neglected zones of the central area or in inner and outer suburbs, continue to exist and, indeed, their citizens sometimes constitute a rising percentage of the total population. Those responsible for schools in poor urban neighbourhoods frequently have to work with children who are either apathetic or actively delinquent, especially after the age of twelve or so. The children often come from heterogeneous ethnic and cultural backgrounds and unstable home backgrounds ; their parents may be indifferent or even hostile to the school ; the whole community ethos may run counter to what the school is trying to achieve. It is from such schools that emerge the great majority of school leavers without qualifications.

There is no easy answer to this problem. It can certainly not be overcome by an education system operating in isolation from other social agencies. Apart from the strategies to deal with educational inequalities discussed above, it would seem necessary to pay particular attention to the school's role in preparing for working life.

Policy Issues

Although in a few countries there are still marked disparities between schools in inputs per pupil, many countries have succeeded in ensuring equal material inputs to schools, regardless of the social milieu in which they are located (see Table 4). They have also succeeded to some degree in ensuring equal access to educational resources and opportunity for disadvantaged students, partly by removing discrimination against them and partly by providing them with categorical financial aid and supplementary services. What most countries have not succeeded in doing is to eliminate the achievement gap between disadvantaged children and their peers as is illustrated by the many boys and girls leaving school without marketable skills and the small percentage of lower social groups, ethnic minorities and handicapped children proceeding to higher education and taking up higher level occupations. The challenge for the future is how to improve on the performance of the last twenty years. This might entail, in the first instance, undertaking thoroughgoing evaluations of the short-term and long-term effects of particular programmes and practices, for example pulling-out and mixed-ability teaching, with a view to drawing conclusions about which actions seem to work and which do not. It should also entail concentrating more on impact and process than on targeting strategies and financial instruments.

Continuing efforts will be required to find ways of reducing inequalities between rural schools and urban schools and between high-achieving and low-achieving schools within urban areas. The question of whether to integrate or not to integrate the handicapped has to be resolved in the light of cost and prevailing cultural factors and how to judge whether such policies are effective. Most countries are now committed to a multi-cultural educational policy but many have still to decide how the policy is to be implemented with respect to such critical choices as whether to mainstream or separate, or to encourage teaching in one common language or several languages, or a combination of both.

Table 4. **Situation of pupils at the end of compulsory schooling by socio-economic origin**

CANADA, 1971

	In post-secondary education										Outside education								Grand total	
	7th to 9th year		10th to 13th year		Full time		Part time		Total		Employed		Job seekers		Others		Total			
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
	Population one year after the school leaving age																			
Upper category	6.5	6.4	16.6	15.8	11.7	14.1	13.6	9.5	14.7	14.6	5.8	6.3	12.3	5.3	7.8	7.9	6.8	7.2	13.4	13.7
Middle category	11.1	9.1	18.0	17.9	13.1	16.2	13.6	18.7	16.6	16.8	9.9	13.0	9.4	11.8	11.3	10.4	10.5	11.4	15.7	16.1
Lower category	82.4	84.5	65.4	66.3	75.2	69.7	72.8	71.8	68.7	68.6	84.3	80.7	78.3	82.9	80.9	81.7	82.7	81.4	70.9	70.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

DENMARK

Situation 27 months after leaving basic school in 1973-1974

Socio-economic origin	General	Vocational	Total	No other education	Other education discontinued	Other education completed	Total
Self-employed farmer	21.4	33.1	54.5	25.1	1.5	19.0	45.6
Other self-employed	30.5	33.0	63.5	21.4	2.7	12.4	36.5
Of which:							
Liberal professions	59.5	17.3	76.8	10.4	3.7	9.0	23.1
Managerial	54.1	22.0	76.1	11.6	2.1	10.1	23.8
Middle-level employees	30.3	35.2	65.5	20.4	3.0	11.1	34.5
Clerical workers	23.9	34.0	57.9	27.2	3.9	11.1	42.2
Skilled workers	15.9	38.3	54.2	31.9	3.3	10.7	45.9
Unskilled workers	8.8	32.7	41.5	45.7	3.7	9.1	58.5
Total	22.8	31.0	53.8	31.4	3.3	11.5	46.2
Father's education							
Under 10 years	15.3	32.3	47.6	37.9	3.3	11.1	52.3
10 to 12 years	25.5	35.1	60.6	23.7	2.9	12.8	39.4
Higher education	58.7	19.8	78.5	10.2	2.1	9.2	21.5

UNITED STATES

Dropouts in secondary education

	Employed	Unemployed	Others	Total
1972				
White	47.3	14.7	38.0	100
Black	41.4	23.6	35.0	100
1976				
White	48.7	18.4	32.9	
Black	20.0	23.7	56.3	100
1977				
White	54.5	16.9	28.5	
Black	33.8	24.0	42.2	

Table 4 (*continued*)

ITALY

Activity envisaged after upper secondary leaving certificate in 1972

	Studies	Employment	Studies and work
Managerial	46.2	9.6	44.2
Middle-level employees	28.4	23.3	48.3
Manual workers	11.2	44.2	44.6
Total	22.9	31.2	45.9

NETHERLANDS

Population aged 16 by type of education being received or received earlier

	In lower secondary education						In upper secondary education				Total[5]	
	Uncompleted[1]		General		Vocational		General		Vocational[2]			
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Upper category	0.4	—	39.2	32.3	8.8	9.1	46.0	50.7	1.9	6.5	97.5	100
Middle category	0.5	0.4	28.8	22.7	25.1	6.5	16.6	13.3	5.8	12.5	79.5	58.5
Lower category	0.6	0.5	16.4	15.5	29.2	7.6	6.8	5.1	4.3	9.6	60.4	40.7
Total[4]	0.8	0.6	23.8	21.1	25.3	7.4	14.5	14.4	4.6	10.3	71.8	56.2

	Outside education: lower secondary									
	Uncompleted[1]		Completed				Level unknown		Total	
			General		Vocational					
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Upper category	1.1	—	0.5	—	0.8	—	0.1	—	2.5	—
Middle category	7.9	14.8	1.4	5.5	9.6	18.1	1.5	3.2	20.4	41.6
Lower category	18.9	25.5	1.6	5.5	14.8	21.7	4.3	6.4	39.6	59.2
Total[4]	12.8	17.8	1.4	5.0	11.0	16.3	3.0	4.7	28.2	43.8
Of which (as % of total):										
Employed	93.3	84.1	95.8	90.8	97.8	88.8	66.0	70.6	92.2	85.2
Temporary non-active	1.6	1.5	2.6	0.7	1.0	0.6	1.3	0.3	1.4	0.9
Non-active	5.1	14.4	1.6	8.5	1.2	10.6	32.7	29.2	6.5	13.9

UNITED KINGDOM (Great Britain)
Population aged 16 to 19

	In full-time education	In part-time education	Outside education
Upper category	45.7	13.2	41.1
Middle category	41.4	10.4	48.2
Lower category	21.4	11.3	67.3
Total	29.0	12.0	59.0
Girls	29.0	5.0	66.0
Boys	29.0	18.0	53.0

SWEDEN
Situation of pupils one year after leaving basic school

	Gymnasia for 3 or 4 years		Gymnasia for 2 years		Other		Total		Employed		Job seekers		Others		Total		Unknown	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
1972																		
Occupations requiring higher educational qualifications	79.4	64.9	5.5	8.0	6.5	11.6	91.3	84.5	8.7	8.4	—	2.6	—	0.3	8.7	11.3	—	4.2
Managerial	54.9	44.1	14.1	18.9	17.5	15.3	86.6	78.4	10.6	12.7	0.8	1.7	0.2	1.9	11.6	16.3	1.8	5.3
Other employees	30.5	25.6	18.0	21.8	26.9	26.2	75.5	73.7	17.7	20.1	1.7	2.1	1.8	1.8	21.2	24.0	3.4	2.3
Skilled workers	20.1	18.7	11.5	19.2	34.5	30.5	66.1	68.5	23.9	23.8	2.1	2.0	4.7	2.6	30.7	28.4	3.2	3.1
Other manual workers	12.4	11.8	9.8	16.3	37.5	32.5	59.6	60.6	31.8	29.2	3.0	3.5	1.8	4.1	36.6	36.8	3.8	2.7
Total	26.7	22.4	12.4	18.2	30.5	27.9	69.6	68.5	23.0	22.9	2.0	2.7	2.0	3.0	27.0	28.6	3.4	2.9
1975																		
Occupations requiring higher qualifications							94	82	5	17	1	—	1	—	6	18		
Managerial							81	78	18	19	1	3	0	1	19	23		
Other employees							77	71	21	26	2	3	0	1	23	30		
Manual workers (over 7-8 years of studies)							75	70	21	26	3	2	1	2	25	30		
Manual workers (7-8 years of studies)							60	57	37	36	2	4	2	3	41	43		
Manual workers (education unknown)							45	46	50	45	4	4	1	5	55	54		
Total							68	65	29	30	2	3	1	2	32	35		

1. Including primary education.
2. Including non-university higher education.
3. Including a level unknown.
4. Including children from incomplete families and the "others" category.

Source: National statistics.

VII

PREPARATION FOR WORKING LIFE : PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

Expectations of Society

Society expects its schools not only to give the young a good general education, but to prepare them effectively for living and working in the adult world. Today, there is in OECD countries widespread anxiety that this expectation is not being fulfilled. This anxiety has undoubtedly been precipitated by the fact that many school leavers are experiencing difficulty in obtaining a job consonant with their own and their parents' aspirations or, indeed, in obtaining a job of any kind. While recognising that unemployment or unpalatable employment is likely to affect all age groups, critics of the schools claim that young people are disproportionately at risk because they are leaving school ill equipped to meet the minimum requirements of the adult society which they are about to enter. The schools, it is alleged, are not raising them to the appropriate standard of competence to function in an occupational role and to a proper understanding of the complexity and diversity of the world of work.

Employment Outlets

The new emphasis on preparation for working life has structural, curricular and process implications. It is also related to the problem of the changed relations between compulsory education and the labour market resulting from the extension of this level of education to virtually the whole of the age group. General certificates awarded after compulsory schooling tend to lose their positive screening value for the allocation of jobs, but at the same time serve to discriminate against those who have not attained the formal standards required and who thus have to leave the system without any formal qualification or marketable skills. This raises a whole series of questions as to the proper balance which needs to be achieved between the transfer and terminal role of this level of education, the relations between general and vocational education, links with the employment sector and with further training and how certification procedures could be modified so as to provide useful information to employers and at the same time protect candidates against discrimination.

If school leavers could still be absorbed easily by an expanding economy, it is unlikely that "preparation for working life" would have loomed saliently as an educational issue. As in the case of the "back to basics" issue, however, the "new vocationalism" trend in educational debate is as much a reflection of shrinking employment opportunities for school leavers as a reflection of the putative failure of schools in recent years to contribute to economic growth. The diagnosis of youth

unemployment recently undertaken by OECD (1980) shows that most unemployed young people are without jobs not because of deficiencies in the education system but because of lack of demand in the economy. Nevertheless, the employment problem which many school leavers face does pose an important educational problem : how to give pupils saleable skills and how to enable them to make informed decisions about future employment in the present context of limited opportunities and future uncertainty in the labour market.

The object of the present chapter is to identify the main issues that arise in determining the part that schools might play in constructing a coherent and comprehensive strategy for assisting the young to make a satisfying transition to working life. From the outset, however, we wish to stress the institutional limitations of schools for preparing young people for life after schooling.

Goals and Functions

Above the general goals and functions of the schools were discussed. Here we are concerned with one particular goal. Schools operate amid pressures and constraints. Policies and resources directed at making them more hepful to young people entering the world of work might have unintended side effects on the attainment of other objectives. The great merit of the concept of preparation for working life is that by transcending the concept of "preparation for work", which is commonly interpreted in the pejorative instrumentalist sense of specific job training, it does not imply a conflict with the general aims of the schools. At the same time, in directly linking the learning experiences of young people in school with the variety of choices and tasks that will face them in the future it reminds administrators and teachers that they are dealing with a graduated process of transition which affects the young from about the age of 12, when they begin to reflect consciously on who they are and what their futures will be, until the age of 17 and beyond. The challenge is how to equip them to cope successfully with a world that lies outside their experience. This calls for a long-term and not a short-term strategy and for stress on those aspects of general education, familiar enough already, with immediate bearing upon the process.

As we have seen, all countries lay down such broad goals for their schools as the development of the whole individual personality and equality of opportunity irrespective of social and regional origins. Many administrators and teachers are fully aware of the dissonance between the school's view of work and the adolescent student's view of work which writers such as Webb (1962) have pointed out :

> "What sort of person would the boy become who accepted the standards the teacher tries to impose ? In himself he would be neat, orderly, polite and servile. With the arithmetic and English he absorbed at school, and after further training, he might become a meticulous clerk, sustained by a routine laid down by someone else, and piously accepting his station in life. Or, if he got a trade, we can see him later in life clutching a well-scrubbed lunch-tin and resentful at having to pay union dues because the boss, being a gentleman, knows best. To grow up like this a lad has to be really cut off from the pull of social class and gang, which luckily few of the boys at Black School are, because both of these types are becoming more and more redundant as mechanization increases and job content decreases."

Willis's (1977) study of working class boys in an English comprehensive school in an inner city industrial area reveals the tremendous social pressures on these boys to take their place on the shop floor and so earn the acceptance of the community to which they belong. These boys need to prove themselves among their workmates to be capable of facing and surviving the realities of the factory floor with its hard and

brutalising conditions. For such boys vocational identity is in terms of generalised labour rather than specific occupational role.

Education administrators and teachers justifiably claim that society is unclear about its objectives and fails to give them clear guidance. It would seem essential, therefore, to lay down specific goals for the transition process. This does not call for novel theorising but rather for making more explicit those goals that are already generally accepted.

As a basis for action the following goals might be considered :

i) to create awareness from the earliest possible age of the importance of work for the well-being of society and of the contributions made by the various sectors of the economy and the community and social services to that well-being ;

ii) to prepare school leavers for adversity and rapid change in the labour market, including the prospect both of major personal occupational reorientation and of unemployment ;

iii) to ensure that all school leavers have acquired a prescribed basic level of competence in reading, writing, numeracy and communications skills while recognizing that what is a realistic level for some will be an irrelevance for many others ;

iv) to ensure that each young person is fully informed about the range of jobs (careers) potentially available to him, the type or types of jobs for which his interests and attitudes best fit him and how to set about choosing a career and seeking a job ;

v) to include in the curriculum information about how men and women earn their living and spend their time outside work ;

vi) to prepare those who so desire to go directly into a job.

Main Issues

In pursuing these particular goals the main issues facing the schools may be classified under the following heads ; organisation and structures ; curriculum development ; assessment and certification ; careers education ; orientation of teachers and administrators ; integration with the community. These issues are considered below.

Implications for primary education

It is often assumed that the earlier years of schooling — the first four to five years at school — are unrelated to the process of transition to working life. The evidence shows that this assumption is ill-founded for three reasons :

— the lack of basic knowledge and skills among many school leavers may be traced back to an inadequate initial grounding and the early adoption of bad learning habits and attitudes ;

— since primary education feeds education at higher levels it is inevitably tailored to the objectives of those levels, often with decisive effects as when, for example, primary school children are channelled into different types of secondary school ;

— there is evidence that through the use of imaginative teaching methods even young children can gradually be made aware of basic work values and of what goes in the world of work. In the United States, for example, career education programmes are deliberately designed to include children in the first years of primary school.

Implications for secondary education

The most critical period in preparing the young for working life covers the first three to four years of secondary education (lower secondary education) because it is during these years that future career options and attitudes towards working life are determined, often with irreversible effects. One immediate and important conclusion to be gleaned from experience is that preparation should be seen to begin at the start of the period and not during the last year.

A second and equally important conclusion is that where selection systems operate from the outset of lower secondary education, future options are essentially already foreclosed. This is obviously so when pupils are sent to different types of schools after primary education, most notably when certain secondary schools are largely geared to vocational training. It is less obviously so when within "comprehensive" schools pupils are streamed according to their academic ability. If there is to be genuine equality of opportunity and of access to further education, it would seem essential to avoid early specialisation and to allow for changes of direction.

In countries where policies for some time have favoured a common school and increasingly also a common curriculum for pupils within compulsory education, seeking to break down the previously sharp distinction between "academic" and "non-academic" school and curriculum alternatives in lower secondary school, preparation for specific occupations has been postponed to the post-compulsory stage (as in Sweden and Norway). "Early" vocational preparation in earnest militates against the egalitarian rationale for this policy and also conflicts with the aim of enabling pupils to keep their options for different types of post-compulsory education open as long as possible. Moreover, lower secondary schools organised along comprehensive lines cannot cater in depth for the full variety of skills which early labour market entrants would require — even if such early vocational specialisation were deemed desirable. It is also argued that in an advanced industrial economy, vocational specialisation presupposes a higher level of general knowledge than was previously required and that early specialisation enhances the risk of skill obsolescence due to change in technology and economic structure.

OECD countries differ in the extent to which they leave scope within compulsory education for vocational education of a specialised type. The extent of such provision tends to be greater in countries which have not yet reorganised the lower secondary stage along comprehensive lines, or where such reorganisation is very recent. Some limited scope for very general pre-vocational elective subjects remains within Norwegian and Danish comprehensives. Swedish comprehensive schools appear now to be moving even further away from pre-vocational elective subjects in that the "economics" and "technology" options are likely to be phased out in the new curriculum proposals. On the other hand, in Belgium, distinctive vocational training is offered within the first cycle of secondary education. The pre-vocational curriculum, for pupils in the "B section", is introduced at the age of 13 and is followed by specialised vocational training in subsequent years. The new French *collège unique* now appears to be moving away from a similar system, though "technology" will remain an optional subject for the 15- and 16-year-olds. In Germany a major effort has been made to improve the preparation of young people during the closing years of compulsory school for training and occupational life, including instruction about the world of work, informational visits to and practical work in enterprises, as well as better vocational guidance programmes. The goal is to provide young people with basic knowledge of the requirements of the world of work and to prepare them as effectively as possible for choosing a career. This pre-vocational aid is not intended to anticipate vocational training provision. The policy pursued in Germany is to ensure that as many compulsory school leavers

as possible shall subsequently complete a period of vocational training equipping them with full vocational qualifications, usually under the dual system (combining on-the-job training and training at vocational schools).

One notes that some 85 per cent of Swedish 16-year-olds continue to the upper secondary system, either immediately or within a few years. A similarly high figure obtains in Norway. But in some other countries "school leavers" are far more numerous. For example, in the United Kingdom, about 30 per cent of all pupils continue at school until 17, and about two-thirds of these continue at school until 18 ; another 25 per cent begin a course of further education, either full-time or on a part-time basis. In such countries the policy of postponing vocational education to the post-compulsory stage seems less convincing than in countries where the vast majority stay on in school.

Curriculum development

Four recurring criticisms are levelled at the failure of the school curriculum to prepare young people adequately for working life :

i) it is either not relevant to life after school or fails to make the relevance apparent ;

ii) it is too much preoccupied with academic learning and prejudices many young people against working in trade or industry ;

iii) it is not rigorous enough in promoting the acquisition of the basic skills and, specifically, of job-oriented skills ;

iv) it is not adjusted to the present and future social and economic needs of society.

The first two criticisms are related. The first and third criticisms are to some extent apparently contradictory in that many attempts to relate the curriculum more closely to the real world in which children live often appear to result in reduced attention to basic skills.

To design a curriculum that would disarm all four criticisms is not easy. Schools are in fact always modifying the curriculum in response to both internal and external pressures, sometimes reluctantly and often to their eventual regret. They have to meet the needs of pupils representing a wide range of ability, aptitudes and social background. For example, in certain pedagogic settings, concentration on basic skills obviously benefits low achievers but simultaneously has the effect of leaving high achievers frustrated. There is the further difficulty that non-selective schools must reconcile the needs of those who will proceed to upper secondary education as well as those who intend to leave at the statutory leaving age.

One solution is to recognise that all needs cannot be equally satisfied and to establish priorities. The first priority might then be to ensure that every pupil should be helped to attain an agreed level of competence in the basic skills even if this implies devoting more resources to some pupils than to others — for example by maintaining lower teacher/pupil ratios in remedial classes for low achievers. The second might be to expose all children to an irreducible minimum of basic subjects (a "core" curriculum) at least until the year when it becomes clear who will stay on at school and who will depart at the statutory leaving age. Alongside the core curriculum a range of optional subjects should be offered in the timetables. The third priority might be to set aside periods in the timetable for learning about career possibilities.

If preparation for working life is to be treated as a high priority it is evident that it must illuminate the core curriculum. This means, for example, that all pupils should learn about the basic principles of economic and social organisation, master one or more manual skills, and, wherever possible, visit industrial and commercial

enterprises. In addition, those pupils who plan to leave school should follow optional courses — not excluding explicitly vocational ones — immediately geared to their career plans.

If preparation for working life clearly informs the core curriculum, the problem of reconciling general and vocational education, which is so often raised, is removed. The problem of how much and what sort of vocational education there should be remains. On the one hand, it is a disadvantage for those who wish to further their studies after school to spend too much time on vocational education directly related to immediate employment ; on the other hand, those intending to leave at the end of compulsory schooling are only really motivated when they study vocational subjects. The solution would seem to lie, as suggested above, in the flexible provision of optional studies outside the core curriculum.

The implication of this position is that education for working life, as given within compulsory education, should not aim at preparation for specific occupations, but should be seen as part of general education and include teaching and guidance about working life and training requirements in different occupations, the working of the labour market and of collective bargaining, and the role of major industries in the national economy. As to generally useful "employable skills", the ones commonly mentioned by those who argue that schools should prepare pupils better for working life, they accord well with what schools purportedly seek to develop : literacy, the ability to communicate orally, numeracy, manual dexterity, the ability to co-operate with others, the habits of hard work — as well as with the globally acclaimed and lofty aim of "learning to learn". No doubt, "independent critical thinking" also makes young persons valuable and productive in places of employment. It would be a sad reflection on working life if this were not so. If these are the general "employable skills", then the charge that schools fail to develop them is tantamount to claiming that schools fail in their basic task of general education. Yet there is no hard evidence that schools fail more in this basic task now than some decades ago when they laid the foundations of the skills of those workers who are now in their productive prime, though it may be that those who now leave school at the earliest possible opportunity are less well educated than the greater number who did so under the more restricted scope of educational opportunities in the past.

Finally, there appears to be a strong case for rejecting vocational studies focused on a simple craft or trade. Technical and craft skills now change so rapidly that the emphasis in training has to be placed on versatility and adaptability and therefore upon a variety or cluster of skills rather than upon a unique skill and upon long-term rather than short-term considerations.

If the curriculum is to be related effectively to working life, it is evident that the school system cannot be exclusively responsible for its design and development. The community must also be involved. At the least, representatives of industry, commerce, the professions and the trade unions should play a part in curriculum development. There is good evidence to suggest that employers are by no means clear on what they want or what standards to require. Consider, for example, this statement from the United Kingdom authorities :

> "Educational interests have responded that employers often lay down recruitment standards well beyond the job requirement, have not sufficiently allowed for the difficulties of placing the less able in suitable employment in an increasingly technological society, and do not themselves seek to understand and develop the skills acquired by school leavers."

Assessment and certification

In one respect the relationship between education and working life is clear cut. This is to the extent that educational awards act as a screening and selecting device

for determining future careers. In theory, it may be argued that the individual discovers his own interests and chooses for himself an appropriate occupation ; in practice, his field of choice is governed by his school-leaving qualifications, even when these qualifications may have little direct bearing upon the job he takes up or be far in excess of the knowledge and expertise actually required in that job.

These qualifications are normally determined by examinations. Examinations at the compulsory school level are said to be incompatible with a policy of equality of educational opportunities and to be particularly detrimental to the interests of those pupils who are slow to command verbal skills ; they lend too much significance to academic attainment governed by higher level educational requirements. At the same time, it is obviously essential that in one way or another the progress of each pupil through the school should be monitored so that learning deficiencies and problems can be diagnosed and suitable guidance given about the choice of subjects, especially at lower secondary level. It is equally important that a young person should leave school with some kind of profile report indicating his learning achievements and his personal qualities, for without such a report he would have nothing to show a would-be employer.

Such a report should give useful information to school leavers, but also safeguard them against discrimination and protect the public from workers ill qualified for certain jobs. One measure to be considered is that of systematically applying diagnostic and aptitude tests at critical stages, notably at the transition from primary to secondary school and, say, at the age of thirteen. All this points to the desirability of ensuring that criterion reference assessment should complement norm-referenced assessment, though this is by no means easy to devise. But increasingly examinations are being made available to most children rather than a few. The middle school certificate such as *Mittlere Reife* in Germany, the *Brevet d'études du premier cycle (BEPC)* in France and the Certificate of Elementary Education in Spain, all tend to be attainable at various levels by the majority of pupils (often as much as 80 per cent of the population and 100 per cent in the case of Sweden). Unquestionably developments in guidance, testing and reporting have ensured that the diagnoses of the schools have had increasing importance in determining access to different occupational and social roles. These developments are occurring in most systems.

In present conditions such developments are playing a part even in determining whether or not the school leaver is able to obtain work at all. The process is greatly helped by the better information now possessed by many teachers who have themselves had work experience outside school.

Guidance and counselling

Teachers in general have always shown concern for the overall welfare of their pupils. Only during comparatively recent years, however, has it been recognised that special knowledge and skills are required in order to give young people effective advice about their future working lives. This recognition has led to the appointment in most countries of specialists to deal with the personal learning, social and emotional problems of pupils.

Advice about jobs (careers) tends to be given by officials in ministries of labour (employment) specifically concerned with job placement, or by "careers" teachers, who are not as a rule employed full-time in this capacity. Co-operation among all these specialists and quasi-specialists often appears to be lacking, but would seem to be desirable. It would seem also necessary that "careers" teachers should be enabled to acquire a high level of expertise by means of in-service training courses. They need to be aware of the broad range of occupations available, maintain direct

contacts with firms, have knowledge of special occupations and develop the diplomacy and insights called for in helping the insecure adolescent.

Careers education as such used to be provided, if it was provided at all, at or towards the end of schooling and as an ad hoc auxiliary service. It is today recognised that explicit advice and information should be made available and should be continuous from the time when young people reach the age of twelve or thirteen. From that age onwards they need help in achieving an understanding of themselves, becoming aware of their strengths and weaknesses, thinking about opportunities in work and in life generally, and preparing to make considered choices. This process takes place essentially in two stages. The first involves an open-ended exploration of the whole range of occupations with ample opportunity for a change of mind. The second stage should lead to a decision whether to continue with full-time study or to seek employment.

Representatives of employers and trade unions can make a vital contribution by affording opportunities for work experience and observation, though this is often difficult to achieve.

"Careers" education calls not only for expert advisers, but also for the provision of essential physical facilities and learning aids.

The orientation of teachers and administrators

There is a tendency among many teachers to care more about preparing their pupils to progress from one educational level or institution to another than about removing the barriers between school and working life. The consequence of this, it is often alleged, is that those who intend to leave school at the end of the compulsory stage are sacrificed on the altar of academic achievement. There is evidence to show that teachers, by and large, are unfamiliar with the world of work in industry and commerce and ignorant about employment problems. Teachers are uniquely vulnerable to criticism but they are not unique in being uninformed about conditions in other occupational sectors than their own. Nevertheless, if they are to play an effective part in preparing their pupils for working life, it follows that they must be properly qualified to do so. Thus, it would see necessary to :

i) require recruits to the teaching profession to have had first-hand experience of working life outside the education system. It may well be that the person who goes straight from being a pupil to being a student to being a teacher, without any outside work experience, is becoming a rarity. If this is so, the requirement should not be difficult to satisfy) ;

ii) give practising teachers sabbatical leave to work in industry or commerce ;

iii) enable teachers in training and practising teachers to spend short periods of time attached to industrial or commercial firms as observers so as to see work in progress ;

iv) require practising teachers to attend in-service courses dealing with the implications for school organisation and teaching methods of greater emphasis on preparation for working life ;

v) bring men and women from enterprises to teach in the schools both to benefit from their wisdom and experience and to build up contacts with industry, commerce and the professions.

Of course, it is completely unrealistic to perceive working life as a single homogeneous entity. A teacher's pupils are bound for a great variety of work situations unless the school is placed in a local economy dominated by a single industry. How can an individual teacher be expected to have personal experience of a variety of occupational settings ? He should know something, perhaps, about one or two.

Education administrators at the national and local level often exercise influence over the conditions in which teachers operate. It is important, therefore, that measures should be taken to ensure that they are also well-informed about and in constant touch with the world of work outside the education system.

Links with the community

It has become a commonplace to state that over and above curriculum and pedagogical considerations, the main determinant of learning behaviour and attitudes to society and future careers is the nature of the environment in which young people live outside the school. The influence of the family and the community in shaping attitudes is profound. The choice of a job, for example, is greatly influenced by the jobs of the adults in the larger family circle. If there is a conflict between the values of the school, how can pupils fail to be confused and uncertain ?

The problem is how to bring about more community participation in the running of schools without infringing upon the professional status of the teachers. It is obvious that close relations between teachers and parents are required so that their views can be harmonised and their differences, where they exist, reconciled. Some parents show no interest in or are reluctant to visit the schools attended by their children. Many parents stop visiting the school when their children pass beyond their third or fourth year. The only solution is for the schools (principals and teachers) to try harder to involve parents more. Some local authorities have appointed community workers, based in the schools, to operate in areas where the lack of parental participation is disturbing with a view to stimulating parents to visit their children's schools.

The necessity of involving employers, manpower agencies and representatives of the organised labour force in the design of the curriculum and in the arrangements for guidance and counselling has already been mentioned. Such a mechanism as an employers/school liaison committee could be used to manage these arrangements. A larger question concerns their role, alongside that of leading members of the community and of parents, in the management of schools. The pros and cons of establishing a council in each community to facilitate the transition from school to work seems worth consideration.

Early school leavers

Regardless of upper-secondary enrolment ratios, all countries have a group of pupils who leave school at the earliest possible opportunity and who pose a policy dilemma. There is on the one hand the egalitarian point of view that curriculum structure in compulsory education should avoid classifying pupils as high status "academics" and low status "practicals" and that it should not foreclose opportunities for further study. The Scandinavian strategy to curtail sharply opportunity for vocational study within basic education and to open access to all types of post-compulsory schooling to all applicants regardless of the options chosen in the lower secondary stage exemplifies this stance. The other position, which can lay claim to being equally egalitarian, is that schools must equip early school leavers with useful practical skills of a directly employable type. The German authorities wonder whether :

> "... all basic education should not be compulsory and also include some form of training for a trade or occupation. A shorter vocational course could then be made mandatory for those who do not go on to the secondary school. To release fairly large groups of pupils on to today's labour market without some form of vocational training can be seen as an overly low ambition level."

The former position tends to be associated with a rigid enforcement of regulations concerning the school-leaving age. According to the latter stance, the reluctant full-time pupils might be allowed to attend school on a part-time basis in conjunction with part-time employment during the final years of compulsory schooling. It is interesting to note that in some countries, where the former position has strongly influenced policy, there is now a tendency to make such concessions to pupils eager to leave full-time schooling before the statutory minimum leaving age.

Nevertheless, in the present economic climate the problem of unemployed school-leavers is obviously not solved by continued efforts to transmit general "employable skills" of this type. It is difficult to see how any curricular change could affect the fundamental problem of a scarcity of available jobs. Insofar as jobs are available — or can be created — the policy response in many OECD countries is institutionalised co-operation between school, employment agencies, local employers, and sometimes also local trade unions, in order to ease job entry or to provide short vocational training courses. In Sweden, every municipality has a special council for this purpose which helps to organise short courses, based on the upper secondary school, for unemployed young people in the 16 to 19 age range. In Norway, the local employment office contacts school leavers and upper secondary dropouts individually. Those who have difficulties in finding a job are offered induction courses in a work place. In the last resort, local authorities are committed to creating new jobs for those still unemployed.

But the success of measures of this type will in the final analysis depend on available job opportunities. Improved co-operation between school, public labour market authorities, trade unions and employers, and job creation schemes are valuable but of limited effect. The incidence of youth unemployment can also be reduced by raising the school-leaving age or giving young persons greater incentives to stay in school. Widespread youth unemployment is an encouragement to impose on post-compulsory schooling a custodial function, which itself creates great pedagogic challenges. It is also, alas, an encouragement to some young people to leave sooner than they should because they snatch at the first job to appear for fear of not being able to get another one later on. The emergence of adolescent unemployment in many Member countries has placed an enormous strain on the compulsory schools. While some schools have introduced courses in the syllabus on how to cope with unemployment, most have pursued responsible strategies to find work or continuing education opportunities for all of their intending school leavers. In most Member countries these strategies are taken very seriously and, if not successful during compulsory schooling, may be pursued afterwards. But the conclusion is inescapable that, at least in the short run, high rates of youth unemployment cannot be greatly reduced by educational measures alone. The development of national policies for education and employment has been a major concern of the OECD since the early 1960s. The main guiding principles that are being adopted in Member countries to bring their policies for education and working life close together are presented in *Education and Working Life* (OECD, 1977).

VIII

CHILDREN, STUDENTS, PARENTS AND FAMILIES

We don't need no education
We don't need no thought control
No dark sarcasm in the classroom
Teacher leave the kids alone,
Hey teacher leave us kids alone.
All in all it's just another brick in the wall
All in all you're just another brick in the wall.

(Popular contemporary song)

The Pupils' Role

"Pupils are the material in which teachers are supposed to produce results". Thus, wrote Waller, in a seminal volume published in the United States in 1932, but he went on to comment, "pupils are also human beings striving to produce their own results in their own way". In order to consider compulsory schooling fully we must now pay direct attention to the most important actors in the process — the children. As adults they become the electors and politicians who will take the crucial future decisions about education. In what ways do they influence its development ?

In some school systems student influence is still neither explicit nor formalised. The opportunity to exercise influence is usually restricted to the incorporation of a small group of senior pupils into a lowly position in the teacher group — in a few countries as monitors or prefects — where their task is to ensure that the teachers' decisions are reinforced and supported by a suitably limited range of disciplinary strategies. But apart from this, the role of the pupil is essentially a recipient one and children quickly come to realise that teachers' questions such as "What shall we do today then ?" are usually rhetorical and only to be answered at risk. Moreover, it still remains the teachers' task to identify the interests and needs of children according to professional criteria that are not, and perhaps cannot be, normally utilized by the children themselves.

Nevertheless, in many school systems there has been a notable development of the idea that children should play a part in determining their own schooling. Although they are still called pupils — a term which denotes their dependent status — the increasing use of the label "student" in many secondary schools — and in the present report — may be seen to mark a greater recognition of their participation. In a few countries such participation is enshrined in legislation. In Germany, the recently enacted Parental Care Act is deliberately designed to substitute the notion of "care" for that of "power" in recognition of the fact that relations within the family should be based on partnership rather than on one-sided control. Norway has

recently instituted an "ombudsman" for children. Theories of child-centred education have also led to a situation in which children's expressed interests are sometimes taken into account in determining what the content of the curriculum should be.

At the lower secondary level there is not unexpectedly most evidence of pupil decision making. Project type activities, including problem-solving approaches in the humanities, technology, literature and other subject areas, take pupil influence farther in that it is the individual learner's task to help identify the problems, find solutions and evaluate them. In theory the teacher may act as no more than one expert resource among others that the pupil might call upon in a process of discovery, innovation and creative experience.

Another illustration of pupil autonomy in many schools appears to be the freedom to choose and even to withdraw from some or all of the activities of the school ; in Sweden, for example, parents and pupils have the right to choose electives freely. But, as Bernbaum noted in a report for OECD (1974), few schools offer the opportunity to withdraw from classes. Instead pupils may undertake private study or even leisure activities in the "youth service area" of the school. Many schools now offer students the opportunity of choosing among a range of optional courses ; they may elect to follow combinations of subject areas in their fields of interest, often having occupational connotations identified by themselves. Schools with such programmes usually have a school counsellor associated with them, that is, a teacher with appropriate training given the task of helping pupils to make curriculum decisions in the light of their abilities, prospects and interests which he has helped them to identify.

In their most developed form, such counselling schemes come very near to "mobilizing" student influence. The counsellor using his diagnostic and advisory skills in detailed discussions with, say, eighth or ninth year students, may well have established a comprehensive list of the curricular requirements of the students preparing for their fifth year of secondary schooling. To what extent is this "authoritative" list of requirements binding ? Supposing that the list reveals a substantial demand for commercial courses with typewriting, book-keeping and other applied activities and that this arises in a comprehensive school recently translated from a school with a long academic tradition and a heavy investment in the teaching of classics and the arts. What is the outcome likely to be ? Does the school invest its money in typewriters and accounting machines and cancel its order for new Latin and Greek texts ? In practice, the answer varies, as might be expected, in accordance with the ideologies of the staff. They range from a steadfast refusal to abandon "true academic standards in favour of fashion" to a willingness to modify staffing appointment and deployment policies in a way that "facilitates the needs of the students".

In practice, however, most schools effect a compromise in which there are explicit and implicit restrictions on the choices available to students, both between options and within them. In such circumstances the counsellors may be charged with a function that is translated to one of "selling" the school to the students, convincing them that what the school has available and is prepared to offer is right for them — a situation that has been described by Cicourel and Kituse (1963) in their celebrated account of the affairs of the American "Lakeshore" High School where such practices not only occurred but were also clearly perceived by the students. Does this mean, then, that student influence is based upon only slender foundations ; that as a rule it is at best superficial and that students are fundamentally only free to conform to a situation that is predetermined ?

The two foregoing paragraphs apply implicitly to countries where prevailing policies allow each school or local authority to compose at least part of the curriculum. There are, however, a number of countries where such local flexibility

does not exist. It must also be emphasised that pupil influence on curriculum structure is limited even in education systems stressing individual values. At best, students influence options by voting with their choices. In some countries official policy stresses the importance of pupil participation in planning the programme of work within the courses that they opt for : many teachers would also argue that whether joint participation is officially approved or not pupils do in fact constantly influence teaching in an obvious and important way by their daily response to how and what they are taught.

The good pupil's role

For most children schooling entails playing the good pupil role, the traditional ingredients of which are familiar. They include working hard, paying attention to the teacher, being committed to achieving the rewards offered for successful conformity, no copying or showing of work to other pupils other than in specifically authorized situations, and the ability to give the right answer or at least to feel suitably dismayed when for whatever reason the right answer is not forthcoming. In demeanour the good pupil is interested, enthusiastic, responsive, polite, respectful and anxious to please the teacher. As Sharp and Green (1975) emphasize, "he will be characterised by his busyness". He will be expected to develop according to norms appropriate for his age, sex and social position.

But there are other views of the nature of development that emphasize not only diversity but also a relationship with the prior and present condition of the child rather than a general norm. Here the Baratz and Baratz study of New York children (1970) is illuminating. The work of Bronfenbrenner (1970) indicates the strikingly different "models of childhood" that are approved and endorsed in different societies and also lends support to the relativist argument. And there are, of course, within every school, variations in the definition of the good role. Still, there is little doubt that most teachers of whatever persuasion will have in their minds something approaching the vision of Sand (1968), who described the ideal child "sitting on the edge of his seat, his eyes shining". Hargreaves (1967) has emphasized how important it is for pupils to behave in expected ways since, if they do not, teachers are unable to live up to their own conception of their roles.

Negative pupil behaviour

Schooling is plainly not always an experience to which all students may respond with enthusiasm. We have noticed that important areas may have the consequences of making many children realize their inadequacies and conveying to them the personal sensation of failure. There are in fact two polar categories of behaviour in compulsory schooling, both of them familiar to all teachers. At the opposite end of the scale from good pupil behaviour is negative pupil behaviour. Here the ingredients are sharply different — those of boredom, frustration, a desire to impede if not to make impossible the teacher's role. To such students, staying on at school longer than is necessary is unthinkable ; well before reaching the minimum statutory leaving age they have realized that conformity will bring them little reward.

These polar types of student role have been documented in detail in a British Schools Council report (1969), *Young School Leavers*. The attitudes and responses to school of those who leave at the minimum leaving age are shown to be markedly different from those who desire to continue their full-time schooling. Their choice and evaluation of subjects, their acceptance of the behavioural norms of their school, their perception of their future prospects and the relevance of schooling to them are all fundamentally different. Those who leave early see themselves as having

experienced a basic education that has denied them the opportunity of participation or power in society.

The Hidden Curriculum

Is then the role of the student confined to playing either the good pupil role with varying degrees of enthusiasm or the negative pupil role with varying degrees of hostility ? Such an analysis is still far too crude to explain the subtlety of the relationships between teacher and student through which the basic education is negotiated. To take matters farther we must look at the hidden curriculum. The concept is important not only for the revelation of previously unrecognised components of curriculum in the classroom but also because it alerts us to previously unrecognised ways in which the student plays an important part, at times even the major part, in defining, evaluating and distributing knowledge. Here we come closer to the heart of the elusive identification of the exercise of pupil power in the classroom.

It is through the hidden curriculum, above all, that the powerful influence of children on the practices of basic education occurs — an influence that determines much of the content, methodology and evaluation of the schools. It is an essential feature in the maintenance of order and control in the classroom and every teacher must recognize and be sensitive to it. But, together with the acquisition of skills, it also constitutes the most permanent learning derived from basic schooling. For school leavers much of the knowledge content proves to be ephemeral, soon to be forgotten in all but the most generalised recollections. But the learning gains from the hidden curriculum are enduring, since they constitute the rules of living with one's fellow men. For this reason they dominate the remembered experience of basic schooling and so exercise a disproportionate influence on adult perceptions of what it is like. There is abundant evidence that politicians are regularly guided by such recollections, as are employers and parents. It is in this indirect but crucial way that the pupils' influence on basic education is retrospectively exercised.

Yet for many reasons both traditional and professional this is incompletely recognised in most modern school systems. As a result there often appears to be a contrast between public expectations and school practice. In modern democratic societies the traditional "authority" roles of teachers in basic education are seen to fit uneasily. The widespread support for modern child-centred approaches in the early years of basic education seems to contrast uneasily with the regimes that appear to dominate many schools. Teachers, faced with social pressures that seem to conflict with the traditional expectations of their professional role, experience doubt and difficulty and may even feel themselves unable to respond to apparently irreconcilable demands for spontaneity and order, for creativity and high standards, for independence and co-operation.

Such conflicts, it is argued, are more apparent than real. We may come to grips with the reality by perceiving the strong and active influence of the child in basic education. The child's "hidden" input reconciles the conflicts and makes the "impossible" tasks of the teachers and the schools possible. It is to be hoped that through policies of teacher education (initial and in-service), management training and, where appropriate, participative arrangements, all adults concerned with compulsory schooling will come to understand this fundamental truth.

Peer Learning

At all stages — and unquestionably in the early years — the most significant feature of compulsory schooling is that it allows children to learn from one another. Such learning of the skills of living together, co-operation and competition, sharing

and dividing, determining and implementing collective goals and personal goals can best be learnt from one's fellows. Above all, children can best learn how to be happy with one another, as pioneers of pedagogy such as Montessori and Dewey have reminded us.

The teacher may inspire and facilitate this development by example and management but the true teachers are the other children. If compulsory schooling did not exist society would almost certainly have had to create institutions in which children could mix and learn in modern societies. Only by so doing could societies ensure future generations of well adjusted and competent citizens.

Parent Participation

Are parents simply consumer proxies for their children or are they clients of the schools ? Is discord inevitable between the professionals — the teachers, educational administrators and specialists — and parents ? Are those parents who are alienated from the education system to be positively stimulated to participate in school affairs or is it not more convenient for the professionals to be able to ignore, them ?

Despite much progressive talk and writing about the necessity for close relations to exist between parents and schools, especially between parents and those teachers immediately dealing with their children, it would appear that the foregoing questions still need to be put. There is in many countries a wide gap between theory and practice, between the public rhetoric about the value of good school and parent relations and the limited amount of interaction and cooperation that actually takes place.

There are some parents who believe that teachers should be solely concerned with cognitive development and should not otherwise intervene in the lives of their children. The majority gladly uphold the principle of *in loco parentis,* notably those who opt to send their children to boarding schools, and expect the schools to be concerned with the overall welfare of their children, and with inculcating habits of punctuality, politeness and neat dress. Many teachers themselves wish to concentrate upon subject teaching and resist any suggestion that they should assume a wider caring role. Others feel impelled to take on some of the responsibilities which parents are perceived to be neglecting.

In some countries the law requires parents to carry out such responsibilities as seeing their children's teachers once a term or once a year and signing their report forms. The law may also require that parents be represented on school or class councils, as is the case, for example, with the Head Start programme in the United States. There is also in some countries a growing tendency for the local education authorities to appoint social or community workers, one of whose functions is to try to establish a relationship with the parents of problem children.

But the crucial questions remain. How wide should be the responsibility of schools ? What are the rights of parents regarding the treatment to be received by their children in the schools ? There is abundant evidence of the important role of parents and community in the national reports, and in many Member countries they play quite explicit roles. In countries such as Ireland a crucial link between home, community and school is the local church.

In some Member countries parents and community groups play important legal roles in the provision and practice of compulsory schooling. This is true of Denmark and of Norway where the most striking examples are the Collaboration Committees of the schools.

An important development which may enhance the position of parents is the new British legislation requiring schools to make information about their courses, curriculum and objectives available to parents. However the precise nature of this information has yet to be negotiated by local education authorities, teachers and

their unions. It should be noted however that quite apart from legislative arrangements for co-operation and representation and the existence of specific bodies such as parent-teacher associations there exists, in most countries, a wide range of pressure groups for a wide range of courses (such as Rural Schooling, Ethnic Minorities, Education for the Gifted, Pre-School Kindergartens and the like) through which the influence of parents is often powerfully exercised.

Working parents

If parents are to devote adequate care and attention to the upbringing of their children who are in school and if, *a fortiori,* they are to play a significant part in the life of the schools which their children attend, it follows that they must command the necessary time and energy. Today, however, it is becoming quite common for both father and mother to work full-time. In any event, as divorce and separation rates rise, more and more children are in the care of only one parent who may well be obliged to work simply in order to survive. The long daily absence of fathers and mothers from the home is often prolonged by hours spent in commuting and compounded by a tendency for parents to go out more in the evenings and at weekends.

The consequence of these social trends is that many children see very little of their parents. Moreover, during the limited time when the family is together the parents are often too tired and irritable from the stresses of their work and long travelling to give full attention to their children's needs. It is not for nothing that the "latch key" child has entered into our vocabularies.

A really satisfactory solution to this problem lies outside the control of the education authorities, although they can and do try to mitigate it in various ways, and belongs rather to the domain of overall social and economic policies. For it may be a question of providing working mothers or fathers with alternative cash benefits, facilitating leave from work and flexible hours of work, and enabling parents to work compressed hours — a four-day week, for example. Such measures as siting industrial and commercial enterprises in residential areas so as to reduce the hours spent in commuting would also have a beneficial effect. Finally, it is obviously essential to enable working or single parents to visit their children's schools at times when it is physically possible for them to do so.

The Role of the Family

Above we discussed the specific problems arising from the increasing trend for mothers of young children to go out to work. These problems form part of the larger issue of the impact of the family environment on the education of the young. Does it stimulate them or hold them back ? A recent OECD publication on early childhood education (OECD/CERI, 1982) and present work on the role of the family as such in education point to a remarkable revival in Member countries of policy concern for the cohesiveness and quality of family life. It is recognised that indispensable to a child's happiness and capacity for mental and physical development is a loving and caring family. Schools cannot be expected to substitute for the family.

If children are subjected to physical or mental cruelty, as regrettably many are, inadequately or unwisely fed or generally neglected, if they come from broken homes, they may not flower and flourish as they deserve. In order to help the child to grow, therefore, it may be necessary as a precondition to help the family understand and effectively respond to his needs and problems.

In most industrialised countries there is a legion of agencies, both statutory and voluntary, occupied with family needs and problems. It is obviously desirable that the schools should cooperate with such agencies with a view to strengthening and sustaining the family's role in education.

The Central Dilemma

There is available in OECD Member countries an extensive literature on the links between compulsory schooling, families and community. In the early stages, analyses were based upon simple hypotheses of causal relationships between social class and educational attainment. However, the attempts to put such hypotheses to the test in a wide range of compensatory programmes showed that the link between family and community background and schooling is very much more complex. The most recent literature shows, in particular, that the individual expectations and experiences of parents and children are of crucial importance in affecting the outcomes of compulsory education. Moreover, we now see clearly that home and community is but part of the wider social and political context in which the schools exist and work.

After the disillusionment of the early seventies when attempts to use schooling as a convenient instrument of social engineering appeared to have failed, we have once again come to realise that not only is the work of schools affected by the family, community and general social context which surrounds it, but often it appears to reinforce rather than to change it.

The preoccupations of the literature with problem families, cultural deprivation and similar concerns have inevitably led analysis to concentrate upon areas of compulsory schooling characterised by low attainment and a multitude of other problems — absenteeism, rapid teacher and student turnover, indiscipline and the like. Policy makers and administrators are obliged to give urgent attention to these problem areas ; professional and political pressures alone compel them to do so.

Yet, it is not in the areas of social and educational difficulty that the links between home, community and school are strongest. Rather, there is every evidence that the correlation is much stronger in the more advantaged areas where higher school attainment is paralleled by more favoured family and neighbourhood environment. The national reports indicate a level of formal participation of homes and communities which is very commonly dominated by the more advantaged social groups.

The task of devising policies for compulsory schooling which help to alleviate the problems of the less advantaged families and neighbourhoods, without at the same time penalising the more advantaged, is perhaps the central dilemma of those who administer schooling in all developed societies. The dilemma is not and cannot be one for schools alone. It is part of a far wider set of political considerations that concern the total dynamics of modern societies.

IX

NEW ROLES AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHERS

Need for Adaptation

The changing aims and reorganisation of compulsory schooling necessarily entail a corresponding change in the behaviour of teachers and in teaching styles and methods. The great majority of teachers are well aware of a drive to diversify their functions and that they are today expected to be both flexible and inventive.

From an analysis of the national reports and recent work on the tasks and training of teachers carried out under the OECD Education Committee's Programme (OECD, 1974*a*, 1974*b*, 1979) the behavioural implications for teachers of the changing aims and organisation of compulsory schooling may be summarised as follows :

i) they must pay greater attention to the affective development of their pupils ;

ii) they must be able to diagnose individual learning problems and to invoke the expert assistance of other colleagues or outside specialists or both ;

iii) they must devise curricula and methods that are adapted to pupils individually or collectively or to both ;

iv) they must collaborate with colleagues and, where appropriate, with outside experts in determining the school's specific objectives, its general curriculum, plans for using resources and available time, teaching and learning strategies, the evaluation of achievements — what may be described as the concerns of the "teaching team" ;

v) they must co-operate with parents, representatives of the local community, managers of other socio-cultural activities — the concerns of the "educational team" ;

vi) they must maintain a continuing dialogue with pupils not only so as to get to know them better but also to make the validity of the curricula and teaching methods fully comprehensible ;

vii) they must be capable of objectively analysing methods and results and proposing solutions to problems as they arise.

The very identity of the teacher is, of course, challenged by such a formidable list of requirements. The intellectual certitudes of the past are no longer acceptable now that "knowledge" and "know-how" can be so radically altered by rapid social, economic and cultural changes and now that society expects its teachers to be sensitive to these changes and to extract from them the messages that will reinforce the practice of their profession. Discussion continues unabated on the very contradictions all these pressures may involve. Are teachers being asked to give more

than they are humanly capable of ? While it is understandable that they may be called upon to exhibit more adaptability or responsibility than other professional groups in society, it is unreasonable to expect them to meet new demands without the necessary back-up of human and material resources. Despite the positive changes mentioned above, much still remains to be done to improve training courses and enhance professional status so as to endow teachers with not only adequate skills but also positive incentives to accomplish their new tasks.

Current Problems

One of the first problems is how to bring the conditions of service of the school staff into line with changes in its role and tasks. With few exceptions the professional obligations of teachers are currently perceived in terms of class teaching. But there are many other functions which it is difficult to fit into staff timetables and the absence of any training to prepare for them increases operational difficulties. The search for a solution is complicated by the need to assess the exact amount of time required for each function and to make comparisons with other professions, including the indicator of social status. As in other professions there are considerable differences in the time individual members of a school staff take to perform their various tasks such as preparing lessons and marking, and this makes it difficult to devise a standard model.

Nor is it possible to disregard the obstacles raised by the material circumstances and working environment of a school. It is often difficult to use school premises for some new learning modes, e.g. briefing a large group of pupils, doing individual work in a documentation centre or outside it. The teaching equipment, including audio-visual materials, may also not be suited for certain collective or individual learning modes.

Although a controversial issue that has been discussed in a previous OECD document (1977*a*), mention must be made of the aid which teachers can receive from other specialist or non-specialist adults, inside or outside the school, e.g. auxiliaries, parents, ad hoc lecturers, managers of entreprises who welcome visits or offer practical training courses, and heads of social or cultural institutions. At a time when the economic situation in many countries is unfavourable to any cut in the number of children per class, a compensating increase in the total number of adults able to take charge of pupils in certain very specific types of teaching and learning situations may be desirable. But first it is necessary to allay the fears of teachers that the qualifications for entering their profession may be downgraded.

Finally, it becomes increasingly necessary that the attitudes and capabilities of teachers in their daily tasks be consistent with the values and habits that they are trying to impress upon their pupils. It becomes more and more difficult for an authoritarian teacher to plead for participation if he or she refuses to enter into any real cooperation with other teachers, parents and members of the local community. A sound initial training is therefore essential to the development of the qualities and capabilities required from the teaching staff.

Initial Recruitment and Training of School Staff

Teachers in compulsory schools may be divided into at least two categories. In primary schools there are as a rule what are known as multipurpose teachers coming from training colleges which are autonomous and often "monotechnical". In the secondary schools, however, there are specialised teachers who are graduates of "polytechnic" institutions (very often universities). A teacher's professional training generally determines his social status and teachers in secondary schools

generally enjoy higher esteem. In school a primary teacher's terms of service may vary from one cycle to another or from one teacher category to another.

It is widely believed that the integration of the various teacher training institutions would have beneficial effects, provided that curricula and teaching methods are adjusted concurrently. But the establishment of a homogeneous teaching corps in compulsory schools can only be achieved in successive stages. Forms of collaboration between teachers at the primary and secondary level should probably be tested in the first instance.

Other policies might be evolved to ensure that all teachers in compulsory schools should be trained in the same type of institution, though studying differential curricula ; this is what often happens where all primary school teachers receive a university training. The next stage might be to amplify the "common core" for all students preparing to teach in compulsory schools, although options could be provided to promote subsequent specialisation for dealing with a particular age group or specific groups of disciplines. As in Denmark, the same training could be offered to all teachers intending to specialise at the compulsory schooling level.

In view of the contemporary objectives of compulsory schooling and the teaching and learning processes that they entail, a relevant question to pose is : to what extent should teachers specialise or receive multipurpose training ? In recent years the completely multipurpose training given to primary school teachers and the narrow specialisation of secondary school teachers have both been criticised and new policies have been put into effect. There has been a certain specialisation among the members of primary school teams while specialised teachers have taken over certain additional disciplines such as physical education and art education. For secondary education, or at least lower secondary, a number of initial training courses have been developed to give teachers two and even more disciplines. It is desirable that policies of this kind should also be analysed with regard to the requirements of the whole cycle of compulsory schooling.

It is essential to analyse the structure and content of teacher training programmes, drawing a clear distinction between the "common core" of disciplines and the range of options on the one hand, and the subjects relating to the science of education, with the particular teaching problems of each discipline, on the other hand. This is particularly illustrated by the present controversy over the content of teacher training for the compulsory schooling period and more especially at the level of the lower secondary cycle. The emphasis which is also increasingly placed on the necessity for a type of training geared to school needs, involving a large amount of teaching practice, suggests that attention is being focused on the type of institution which is most suitable for achieving or coordinating this training.

Many educationists are opposed to the idea of comprehensive teacher training on the grounds that different levels of schooling inevitably call for differentially trained teachers. They also point to institutional problems. For instance, how is it possible to reconcile the three-, four- or even five-year academic preparation of a subject teacher in secondary education, excluding training in pedagogics, with the two- or three-year preparation of a primary school teacher, including training in pedagogics ?

Proponents of differential teacher training are unlikely to dispute, however, that once entered into the profession teachers should have the opportunity, if they so wish, of transferring from one sector to another. This points to the critical importance of in-service training.

Importance of In-service Training

The population decline is currently tending to reverse the traditional priority given to initial training. No longer regularly refreshed with recently qualified new

entrants, through the systematic development of in-service training (hereinafter termed INSET), the teacher corps has to be kept alert and up-to-date. This is no longer seen as an isolated activity responding piecemeal to ad hoc demands. Rather, INSET is increasingly expected to find its place in a continuing process : initial training - induction of young teachers - in-service training. According to the precise form of national definitions and policies, INSET becomes to a greater or lesser extent bound up with schemes for career and professional development.

At a recent international CERI conference on "In-Service Education and Training of Teachers and Strategies for Educational Change", the participants agreed that it is now imperative for the school to become the focus for training activities, backed up by sound support structures. The various INSET programmes launched in recent years had not been very attractive since they took too little account of the personal and professional experience of those concerned, their motivations and working environments, and of the fact that they were not sufficiently involved in the decision-making process.

Hence an important shift of emphasis towards INSET programmes aimed at satisfying the needs of individual schools. The expression "school-focused" is used to define this approach. Other types of INSET (such as longer award learning courses, courses aimed at promotion, etc.) should continue, of course, to be available within the framework of the priorities determined by the several partners concerned.

A necessary consequence of this policy is that traditionalist teacher trainers must reappraise their functions and that new trainers should be sought among "peer groups", that is, experienced teachers working within each school. These "peers" can play a fundamental role in supporting a novice teacher, and this role, whatever the ways and means used to exercise it, emerges as particularly important in preparing staff for integration into an environment which is expected to change. The United Kingdom and France recently set up programmes for these novices that offer practical illustrations of what is meant by "school-focused training".

There has been both a proliferation of different forms of in-service training, and, alongside it, an increasing number of training locations. For some years teacher-training colleges and faculties of education have been giving more prominence to in-service training, the more readily so since the number of places available for initial training is on the wane. In several countries such as France, initial and in-service training are linked insofar as a student-teacher doing teaching practice may replace an established teacher while the latter is attending a course of some length at a teacher training college. Another advantage of this system is that it ensures appropriate feedback between the different types of training and contributes to improvements in the course syllabuses through the assessment of performance at various stages in the teachers' professional development.

The value of the recent expansion of local or regional pedagogical centres or teacher centres must also be stressed. The United Kingdom has played a pioneering role in this field. In recent years similar centres have been set up in Australia and North America.

In Australia federal funds made available through the Australian Schools Commission have helped to establish autonomous education centres in which teachers and members of the community interested in education initiate and control activities designed to improve their own competence. Inner city centres have taken up the problem of the disadvantaged in their areas, and country centres have concentrated on the needs of isolated teachers. In areas of high migrant population, centres assist with the preparation of ethnic materials. In most states, these are supplemented by state-funded teacher centres. In Italy regional centres are being set up covering in-service training, educational experimentation and research.

In the United States many school districts have established in-service training centres which often incorporate a reference library, an audiovisual centre, workrooms for developing instructional materials, and rooms for seminars and lectures. With increasing frequency, control of such centres is being assumed by the teachers themselves. It should be added that a recent public law allows for the subsidising of certain centres with a variety of functions.

In a difficult economic situation, it is commonly agreed that assessment of needs, allocation of priorities, and programming of training schemes must be the outcome of participatory negotiations in which the profession itself can express its views on the development of its members in the context of the wider needs of school and community. In Sweden teachers have for long been consulted every year at both local and national level on in-service training plans. Legislation may make provision for training leave entitlements. In France, primary-school teachers have a total training leave entitlement of one year in the course of their career and may use it in several instalments. The United Kingdom authorities hope that when economic conditions improve it will be possible to allow the secondment of 3 per cent of school teachers for training activities at any one time.

The variety of training locations and schemes will make co-ordination of activities between different institutions increasingly necessary if optimum and effective use is to be made of the resources available. Some American experiments with INSET have led to a number of conclusions as to the conditions for effective co-ordination between the various partners involved, conditions which may be summarised as follows :

i) definition and classification of the different types of INSET corresponding to varying needs and approved by the partners ;

ii) detailed surveys of all existing training resources ; creation of new or complementary institutions where necessary ;

iii) agrement between partners as to their specific capabilities — their role in the best position for each in the partnership ; to avoid any confusion the distinguishing features of the institutions and interested partners should be highlighted as each must be in its proper place ;

iv) agreement between partners as to the way in which data on training needs are to be collected, analysed and classified ;

v) concerted programming of training schemes, widest possible dissemination of information on programmes available ; agreement on the characteristics and methods of assessing performance ;

vi) self-renewal of participating institutions and co-ordinating machinery on the basis of the assessment.

Finally, it may be useful to highlight certain priority training schemes capable of providing a response to some of the present problems in compulsory schooling, mentioned in previous chapters. First, as the Australian authorities suggest, initial awareness of levels of schooling should be developed in order to achieve smoother transition for pupils between pre-school and primary, primary and secondary. This could be achieved by way of exchanges in the form of visits/seminars/assignments and, obviously, by courses on more specific topics, stressing the particular features of each educational cycle, with exchanges of information among the teachers concerned.

Second, a more effective transition of pupils to adult working life, particularly for those not continuing their education beyond compulsory schooling, might be achieved, as argued above in Chapter VII, by giving some teachers the opportunities to take up temporary functions in other spheres of work. A few years ago, France and Belgium (OECD, 1974*c*) were leaders in this field. In France, a few secondary teachers in general disciplines were able to carry out one-year training assignments in

firms. These experiments were recently taken up in another guise with training assignments in firms for periods of approximately six weeks, the secondary teachers involved being replaced in the classroom by colleagues acting as supply teachers. The Belgian education authorities were able to set up a somewhat complementary activity, with help from the Belgian Productivity Office, by organising joint seminars bringing together teachers, managers and business executives, in which each person gave his point of view on possible improvements in the school curricula. Similar experiments are currently under way in the United Kingdom, aimed at making the teaching profession more aware of socio-economic realities.

Third, Australia, and particularly the State of New South Wales, affords an example of a scheme for redeploying supernumerary teachers, with its activities led by a re-orientation and adaptation service of the Ministry of Education and aimed at redeploying teachers in areas of shortage.

Fourth, increasing emphasis is laid, particularly in countries which follow the Anglo-Saxon tradition, on a decentralised system of educational management, such as the United States, on instructing teachers in what has been called the "middle management" of various types of resources, entrusted to the teaching team rather than the individual teacher, in order to achieve a series of teaching objectives. In a context in which the school and its staff are expected to be accountable for performance, training activities can contribute to a more effective use of resources in school and classroom, while at the same time enabling the teacher to develop his professional autonomy.

The fifth type of training scheme is not initially adressed to all teachers but chiefly to the various categories of leaders to be found mainly within the schools (heads, deputy heads, heads of department, etc.). In Europe, Sweden currently provides a striking example of a coherent long-term programme of this type of training designed for educational teams comprising 10 or 15 members, requiring up to 56 days' training spread over two years.

The sixth type of training scheme is linked with the technological revolution. The use of computers, audio-visual equipment and increasingly miniaturised and sophisticated media, cannot go unheeded in educational circles. It is obviously desirable that teachers should be made familiar with the new technological aids, either for use in the classroom or so as to be in a position to prepare their pupils for living in a world transformed by technological advance.

Lastly, the difficulties experienced by some schools in coping with multi-cultural needs, in particular in areas of heavy immigration or where several linguistic minorities live side by side, argue in favour of the systematic development of in-service training schemes aimed at instilling a greater awareness in teachers of the specific cultural characteristics of some of their pupils.

In-service training appears to be most effective when it assumes many forms. There is strength in flexibility and variety, in resorting to multiple providers, short and long courses, formal and informal methods. Thus, in the United States :

> "In-service opportunities, whatever their source, are not limited to workshops and lectures. They include visits to other schools, availability of consultants for individual problems, and certain days... on which pupils are excused from school and teachers participate in special programs of enrichment.
> Many school districts encourage their teachers to participate in in-service education in a variety of ways. They may : 1. require a prescribed number of courses before a teaching contract can be renewed ; 2. subsidize tuition fees at the university ; 3. increase the salaries of teachers who earn higher degrees, complete a given number of credit hours, or participate in other approved in-service educational activities, or 4. release teachers from classroom responsibilities and provide travel expenses to enable them to attend professional gathering."

Characteristics of Teachers

Sex distribution

Teaching in compulsory schools has long been a profession employing a large proportion of women. Their proportion in primary education increased in almost all countries between 1965 and 1976 (see Table 5) when it reached 92 per cent in Portugal, 88 per cent in Scotland (1974 count), 81 per cent in Italy, 77 per cent in England and Wales, and 76 per cent in Canada (having reached 81 per cent in 1970). The distribution of teachers by sex is relatively even in the Netherlands (53 per cent women) and Japan (56 per cent, but 48 per cent in 1965). In the few countries for which data are available women are still in the majority in lower secondary education but to a considerably less marked extent, except in Japan where, though increasing, they account for only 31 per cent of teaching staff. On the other hand, in upper secondary education, the situation is reversed and women are in the minority (except in France), often quite markedly (25 per cent in the Netherlands, 31 per cent in Japan).

The available data on the distribution by sex of heads of establishment are highly instructive, especially when compared with the data on teachers in general :

	1965	1970	1972	1974	1976
BELGIUM					
Primary	48.4	47.1	46.6	—	—
CANADA					
Primary	—	28.2	26.8	25.6	23.1
Secondary	—	21.8	16.4	16.7	15.9
DENMARK					
Basic school	13.4	11.0	9.5	9.2	8.9
UNITED STATES					
Elementary and secondary	—	—	—	12.7	—
NETHERLANDS					
Primary	—	6.0	—	3.6	3.5

Even in the primary sector, where they are in the majority, women are greatly under-represented in administrative and managerial posts, except in Belgium.

Part-time teachers

The proportion of part-time teachers varies considerably not only from country to country but also in terms of distribution by sex and level of education. While the proportion is negligible in Japan, it is very high in Denmark. In all countries it is much larger for women than for men and for secondary rather than primary education. In Sweden, the number of part-time male teachers doubled and that of female teachers tripled between 1974 and 1976 mainly because of a decision to reduce the statutory number of contact hours for teachers.

Age breakdown

A striking fact to emerge from Graph VI is the youth of the teaching staff, particularly the women. In 1976 between 39 per cent (Portugal) and 55 per cent (Canada) of men teachers in primary schools were under 35 years old ; the percentages for women ranged from 47 per cent (Ireland) to 57 per cent (Portugal). In secondary education the percentage of teachers under 35 is only slightly lower in most countries.

At the same time, fewer older teachers are leaving the profession (OECD, 1979, Part Two). The proportion over 50 leaving in 1976 (the nearest year for which data were returned) was less than 20 per cent. In other words, the demand for new

Table 5. **Percentage of women teachers in the different types of compulsory education, 1965-1976[1]**

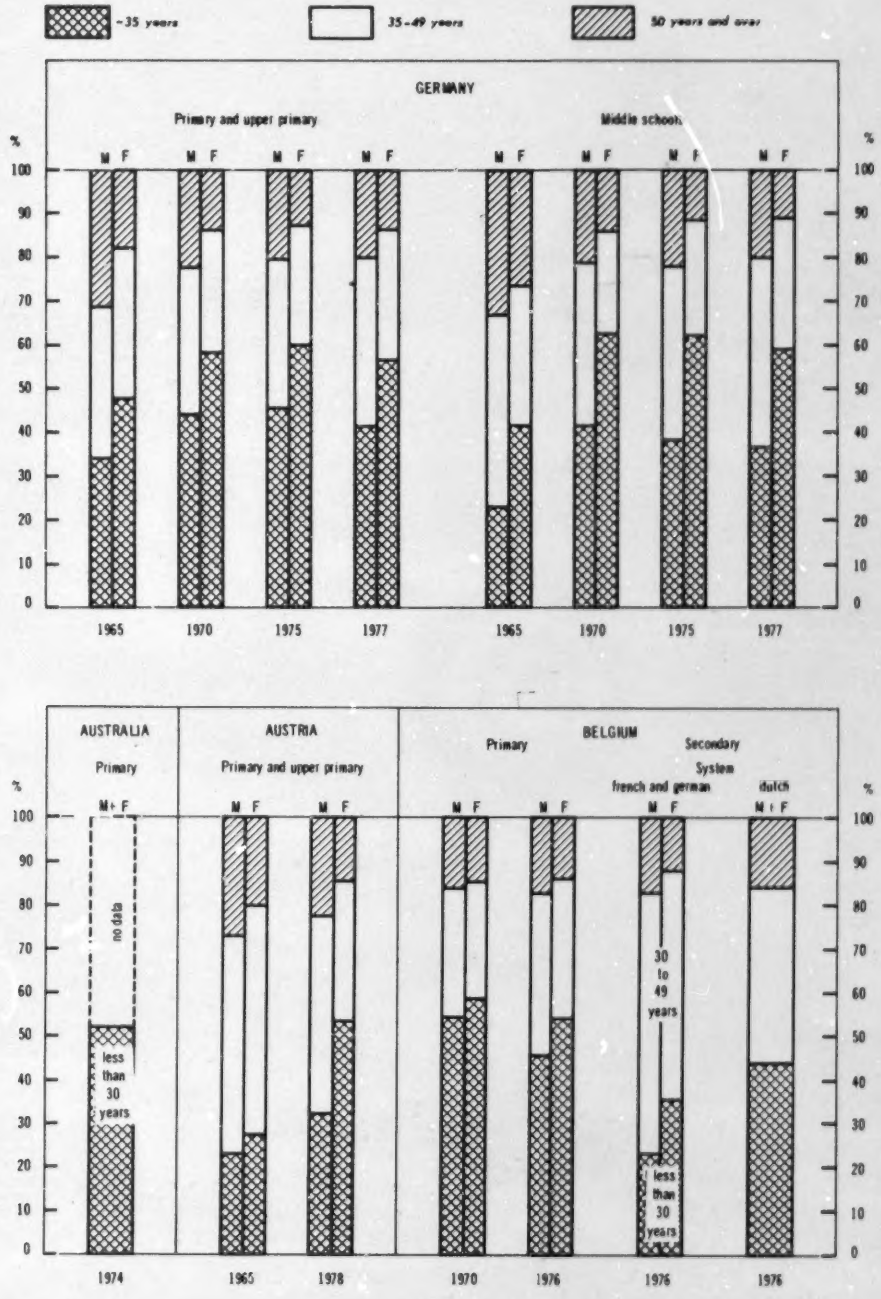
	1965	1970	1972	1974	1976
GERMANY					
Primary and upper primary	49 3	55.5	55.1	59.9	61.6
Middle school (Realschule)	43.0	44.6	46.3	48.5	50.2
Gymnasia (1st and 2nd cycles)	30.1	31.3	32.4	33.4	35.2
AUSTRALIA					
Primary			71.3	72.5	72.4
Secondary			48.4	47.9	47.3
AUSTRIA					
Primary	57.4	63.3	66.3	70.0	71.9
Upper primary	48.7	50.6	51.6	52.4	54.7
BELGIUM					
Primary	54.9	56.2	56.6	54.0	57.6
CANADA					
Primary		80.7	80.2	78.6	76.3
Secondary		40.4	36.9	37.9	34.7
DENMARK					
Basic school	51.6	55.1	56.4	58.9	59.3
SPAIN					
Primary/basic school	63.4[3]	63.9[3]	58.9	58.4	57.5
General secondary	40.6		48.8	45.0	46.0
UNITED STATES					
Elementary				83.3	
Secondary				45.7	
FRANCE (public)					
Primary	64.8	67.3	67.6	67.0	67.1
1st cycle secondary					
Secondary (CEG)	56.3	67.7	58.5	57.6	58.0
Secondary (CES)	58.1	61.7	62.1	62.1	60.5
Lycées (1st and 2nd cycles)	52.3	53.7	53.1	53.0	52.0
IRELAND					
Primary	69.2	68.9	69.9	71.3	71.7
General secondary	55.9	54.9	..	..	..
ITALY					
Primary	74.4	78.0	79.7	81.7	80.9
JAPAN (full-time teachers)					
Primary	48.4	50.9		54.8	55.8
1st cycle secondary	25.3	26.5		29.4	30.9
NORWAY					
Primary	57.1	61.1	63.0		
Upper primary	36.3	40.2	40.9		
NEW ZEALAND					
Primary[2]	60.4	63.8	64.1	62.7	63.2
Secondary[3]	63.3	43.4	41.3	38.2	38.1
NETHERLANDS					
Primary		56.8		54.4	53.2
General secondary	25.1	22.4	22.7	23.8	25.0
PORTUGAL					
Primary[4]	87.7	88.9	90.1	91.3	92.0
1st cycle secondary		60.4	63.6	66.2	63.6
UNITED KINGDOM					
England and Wales					
Primary	73.8	74.8	75.7	76.4	76.9
Secondary (modern)	41.7	41.4	42.6	44.4	45.4
Secondary (grammar)	39.4	39.7	41.0	41.6	41.8
Secondary (comprehensive)	35.4	38.5	38.8	41.0	42.1
Scotland					
Pre-primary and primary	85.6	87.7	88.0	87.9	..
Secondary	40.4	43.9	43.6	42.5	..
Northern Ireland					
Primary	73.4	73.9	74.1	74.7	75.5
Middle school	47.5	47.5	48.0	48.1	49.7
Secondary (grammar)	49.4	45.8	46.1	48.5	46.8
SWEDEN					
Basic school	..	65.3	66.2	65.7	66.5

1. Or year closest to those indicated.
2. Including pre-primary.
3. Forms I and II are included in primary.
4. Including the complementary cycle of primary.

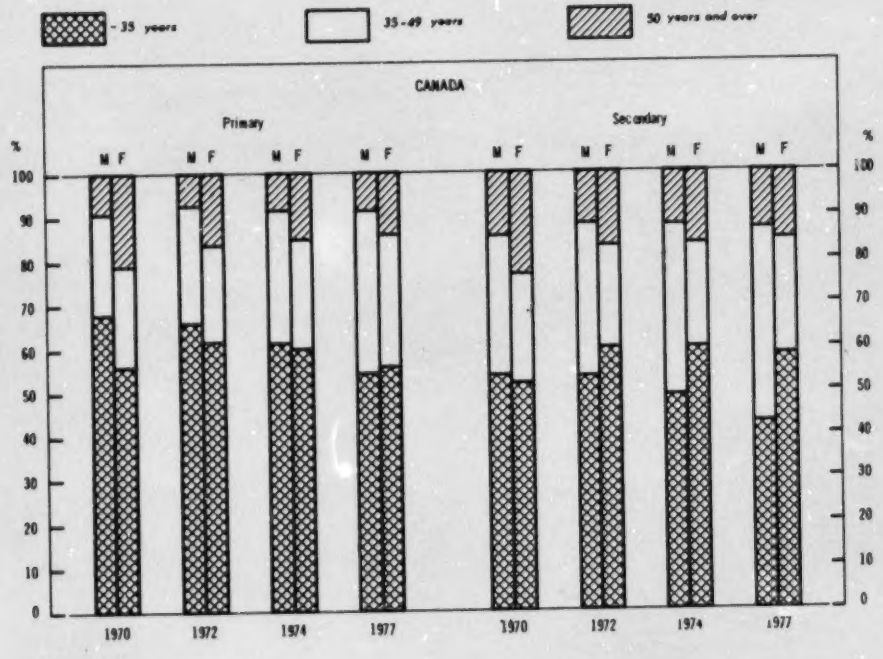
Source: National statistics.

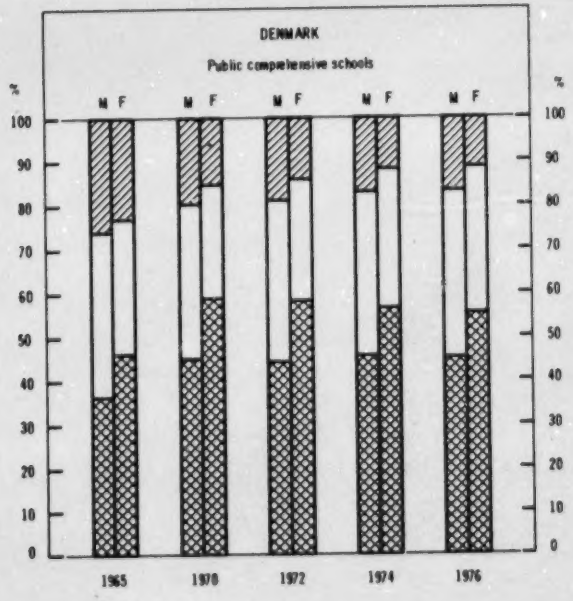
Graph VI

DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHING STAFF BY AGE GROUPS

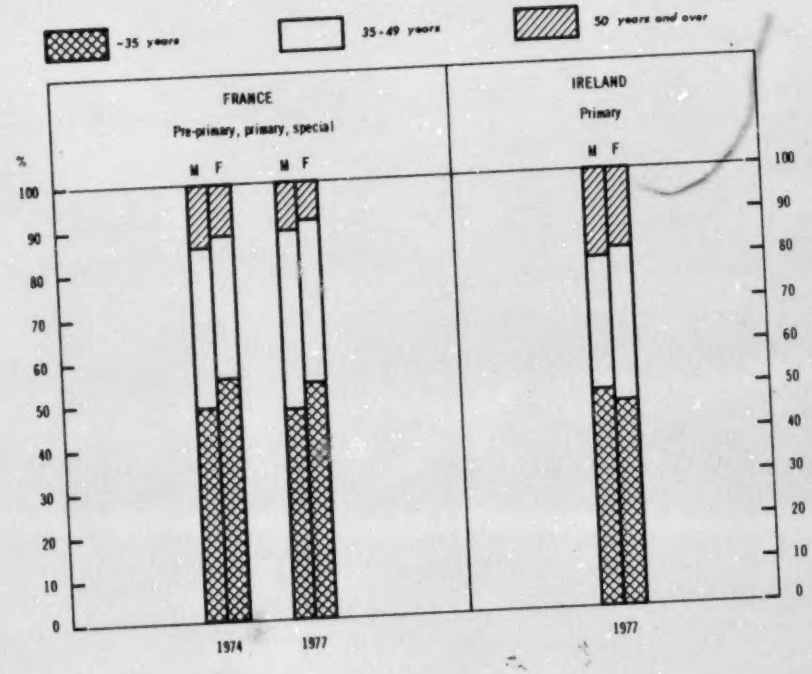


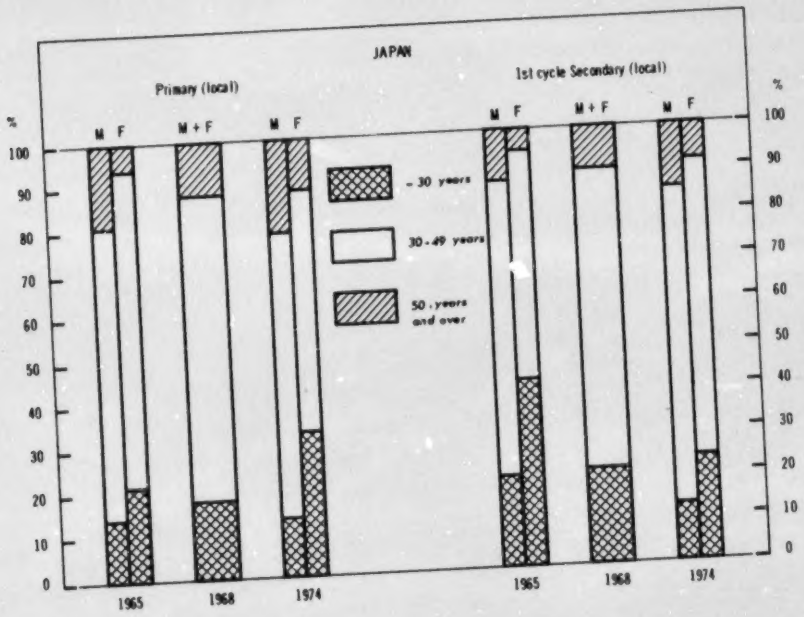
Graph VI (cont.)



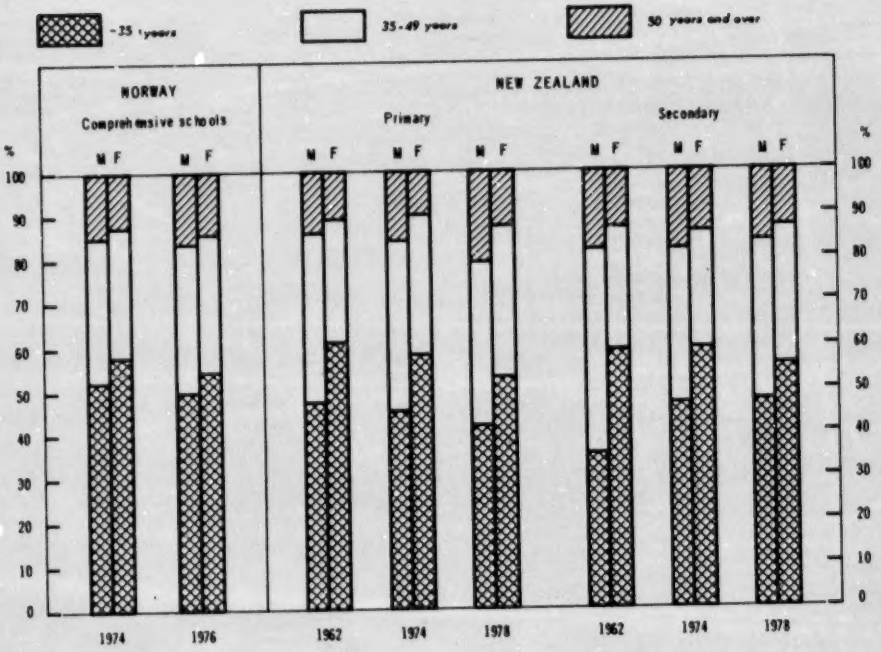


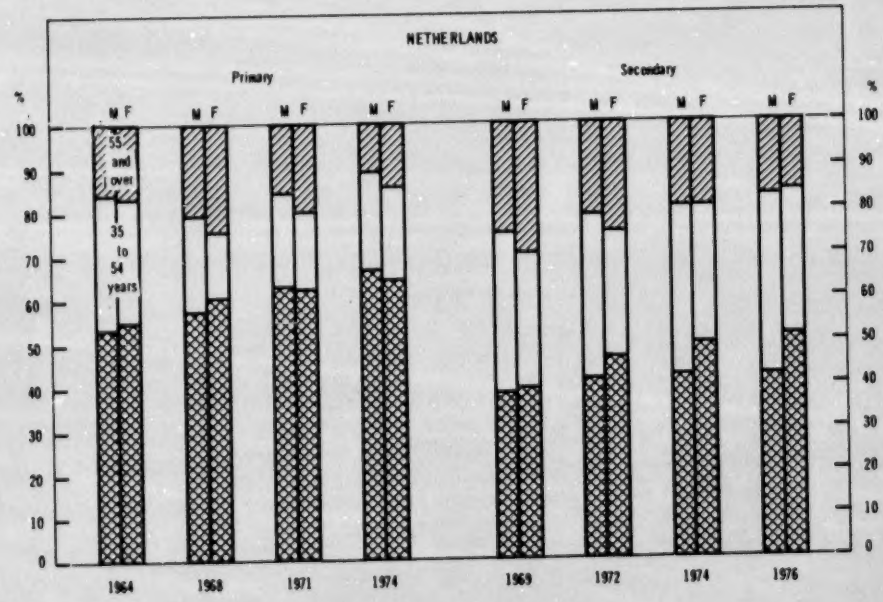
Graph VI (cont.)



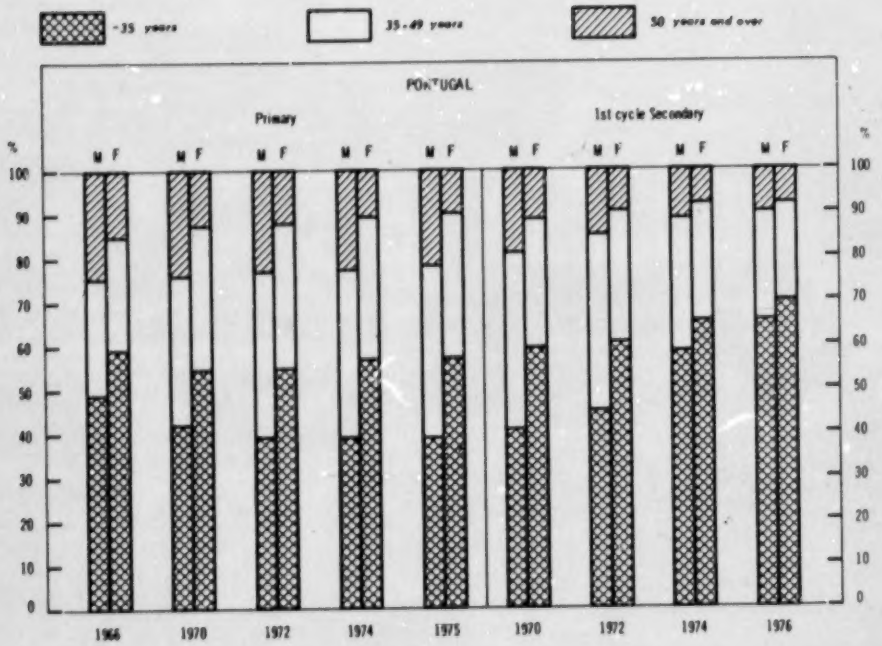


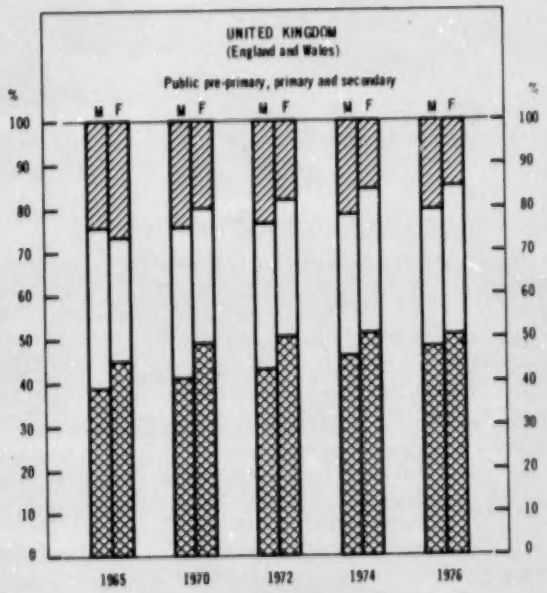
Graph VI (cont.)





Graph VI (cont.)





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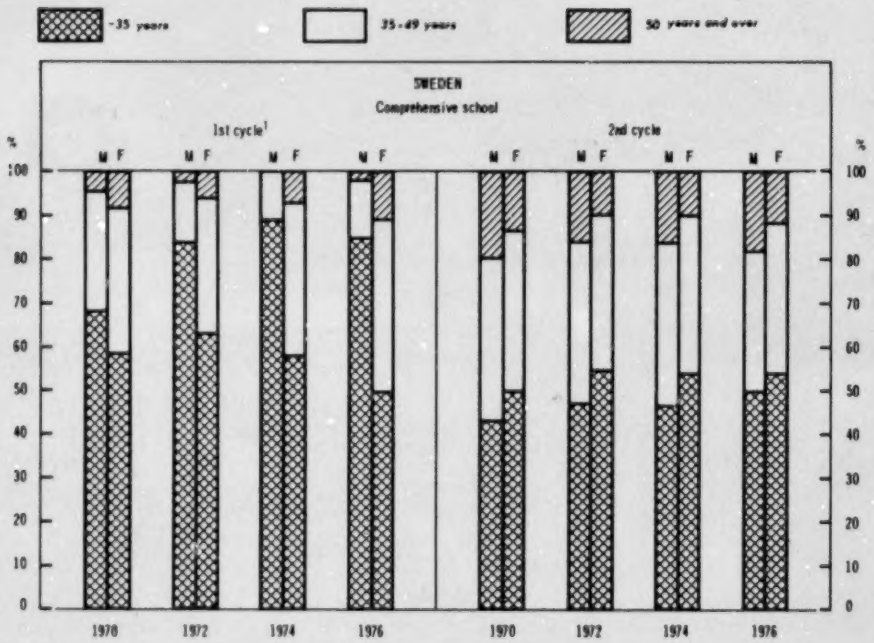

1. The number of men teaching in the 1st cycle of comprehensive schools is so low that the distribution by age is meaningless.

Source : National statistics.

teachers is not only falling because of declining pupil enrolments, it is also falling because there are fewer departures against the background of high rates of unemployment in nearly all sectors of the labour market. The implications of this situation for recruitment and promotion policies will be discussed in the following section.

The Socio-economic Context of Recruitment and Employment Policies

Although forecast during the 1960s, the population downturn took by surprise a good many authorities responsible for teacher training, recruitment and employment. At the end of the 1960s, it was broadly agreed that this period of demographic respite should be used to enhance the quality of the education system.

At the beginning of the period, the consequences of the population downturn were psychologically marked by two phenomena :

i) divergent trends in enrolments at different educational levels and cycles. Growth continued at secondary level, and even in the pre-school sector in instances where this was relatively undeveloped so long as resources were adequate, and training conditions and status flexible enough to allow reasonable staff mobility ;

ii) counter-measures set in motion at the levels affected, with the aim of securing a qualitative improvement of the system : decrease in the number

of pupils per class (in autumn 1978 in the United States the number of pupils per teacher was estimated at 19.7, as against 23.2 ten years before), creation of new learning options, development of individualised techniques, integration of handicapped children in ordinary schools, in-service education and training, lightening of service obligations, etc.

While in the medium term some of these measures made it easier to adapt the system to the new circumstances, longer-term forecasts have shown that not even use of improved norms in Germany and Australia, for example, would enable the surplus of teachers to be absorbed (OECD, 1979 : Part Two).

The lack of flexibility in managing the training and employment of teachers is seen in the fact that overall surpluses exist side by side with persistent sectoral deficits in certain countries (Germany : technical education ; England : mathematics and certain scientific disciplines ; United States : bilingual education and education for the handicapped, etc.). Above all there is in many countries a lack of planning to link quantity and quality in the short, medium and long term in cases where employers and producers of young teachers do not exchange information with each other and do not co-ordinate their activities. The moral drawn by the United States federal authorities from the experience of the population decline of the seventies is that the education system in the United States must learn to anticipate and plan for population shifts. More emphasis must be placed at the higher education level to encourage teacher preparation in the areas of greatest need. State and local education authorities must do more realistic long-range planning about what the nature and size of the population will be. The fall in demand is likely to lead to a decrease in the mobility of teachers either horizontally (from one discipline to another) or vertically (from one cycle to another).

In addition, the current demographic situation, by curtailing promotion prospects and blocking individual progress in a hierarchical career structure, is liable to aggravate this trend, as "rare" specialists leave the profession when the economy recovers. And this situation may also cause a reduction in the intake into the profession of vigorous elements, amongst them young graduates, since certain Member countries would in theory be able to clamp down on all further recruitment for several years.

But a cause of continuing heated controversy between the representatives of the teaching profession and government authorities is the impact of the economic and financial crisis in the mid-1970s on teacher policies. On account of the crisis it was no longer possible to apply in their entirety the above-mentioned measures designed to adjust teacher supply and demand, and certain policy objectives had to be revised. Some teachers may hesitate to leave teaching temporarily to gain experience of other functions in society, for fear of not being able to return to their teaching job afterwards. The same considerations could cause a slowdown in voluntary leave to gain other qualifications, except where voluntary professional retraining is undertaken with state support with the intention of leaving the profession for good. It should be noted nevertheless that certain countries, seeking to maintain a minimum intake of "new blood" from initial training course graduates, have set up special corps of qualified replacement teachers (in France), including replacements for those away on in-service training, while also providing possibilities for early retirement.

It may be feared that the combined effect of demographic and economic crisis might, in the long term, make it impossible to widen the scope for horizontal and/or vertical mobility, and that the profession may still be characterised by considerable uniformity in tasks and status, whereas many teachers, in view of their age, can be expected to remain in the system for a long time. For the same reasons, job opportunities outside the education system are of necessity limited. Even projects for basic qualifications in a broader range of skills (in England) are baulked by the

lack of an alternative labour market, since the development of the socio-cultural sector, for instance, also depends on fast-dwindling governmental or quasi-governmental appropriations.

The measures taken to adjust teacher supply and demand have consisted for the most part of reinforcing the "numerus clausus" restrictions on entry to training institutions, largely of the "monotechnic" type such as teacher training colleges. In England some of these colleges have been closed down ; others have had to merge or be incorporated with polytechnic institutions. In view of the urgent need for rapid reorganisation, it is not certain that the qualitative requirements of training could be taken fully into account. Some institutions, and their trainers with them, have simply sought to "survive". In these conditions of job insecurity there is little incentive to think deeply about the qualitative renewal of training syllabuses, and the conclusions to be drawn from the various adjustment measures taken by Member countries in the second half of the 1970s will not emerge for some time yet. In particular an assessment should be made of the extent to which it has been possible to implement redeployment policies for teachers in compulsory schooling on the basis of a systematic in-service education and training policy, since it is to be feared that the academic specialisation of secondary teachers in certain Member countries may considerably hamper attempts to relocate such teachers in sectors where there is at present some shortfall.

Lastly, the stagnation, or even cutback, in public expenditure may hinder an upgrading of the economic status (particularly in terms of salaries) of the profession or of certain of its less favoured elements in those Member countries where it enjoys lower status than professions requiring a roughly similar level of qualifications. And insofar as it is the extension of training and hence the change in its status which work towards this upgrading, there are grounds for fearing that when it is impossible to meet the salary implications of a change in training level, some responsible authorities may shelve the reform for the time being. In-service education and training policies, although less closely connected with aspects of promotion and status, may also suffer thereby, and in the last few years some Member countries have either frozen these policies for the time being or been compelled to reduce their scope for lack of funds. If, in the longer term, this state of affairs were to continue, it could prejudice ongoing policies for the permanent adaptation of schools to the needs of pupils and society.

In some Member countries, the combination of these adverse factors has already produced reaction from representatives of the teaching profession, and this has strengthened the already increasing politicisation, both at local and national level, of school and educational staff issues. Therefore, the basic question is still how to maintain the dynamism, not to mention the morale, of educators as a whole in economic circumstances in which the profession and the various other educational resources are contracting, while at the same time increasingly numerous and complex new demands are made on the teaching profession. Hitherto, the responses given, if any, seem to have remained strongly traditional. As has been seen elsewhere, measures concerned with all aspects of training, recruitment and utilisation of teachers still show a lack of coherence. More coherence might be assured if the objectives of compulsory schooling were logically translated into adequate teaching and learning processes. If they are to take concrete form, these processes call for changes in the way in which the work of teachers is organised and in the attitudes and competence of teachers, which can only be promoted by reform of initial and continuing training.

In addition there now exists a whole battery of measures in reserve. Whether or not they are used depends on whether the economic situation improves, and even in the case of prolonged stagnation, on the priority given to the education sector in socio-economic policy. This last point can be expected to remain highly topical in

view of the current controversy over the future economic, social and cultural changes which our societies will have to face. As also happened some twenty years ago, people are saying that the education system will have a fundamental role to play in this process of adaptation. It is realised that adaptation will be made easier if educators as a whole and their representatives are aware of the changes which must be made if such changes are discussed frankly and on a clear-cut and realistic basis and if sufficient freedom of action is left to them to adapt the changes locally to suit as far as possible the differing needs of pupils and communities. In a difficult socio-economic climate of societal adjustment to a new situation in which each individual and group has to carry a share of the burden, would this not be the time to engage in large-scale negotiations with the aim of establishing for the future a real social contract for education — particularly compulsory education — in which the rights and duties of the various partners (particularly teachers) would be reassessed and clearly stated in order to minimise the difficulties of implementing the reform ?

X

CONTROL, ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION

Current Issues

In order to ensure that the schools keep on the right track in pursuing the objectives assigned to them by society the legally constituted authorities at all levels have to maintain effective systems of control and accountability. Behind that truism lie very complex processes and pronounced differences in national behaviour. To begin with, the notion of "legal authority" covers a wide variety of historical and political realities. In most countries the mandate of central and local government in respect of education is both more restricted and less precise than their mandate in respect of housing or transport, to cite only two examples. Historical precedents often carry more weight than laws and regulations. Then, the exercise of power is often delegated to lower level administrative and executive bodies that over time develop control instruments of their own which are supposed to complement those of the higher authorities but sometimes supplant them.

The roles played from country to country by the several levels and types of control agencies continually pass through stages of stability and change. Today it would appear that after a long period of stability they have entered into a period of change, characterised in some countries by exceptional flux and conflict. Some countries have witnessed the emergence of an accountability movement. In many countries parents are demanding a say in school government or, at least, a larger say. Novel control mechanisms are being created whose functions are not yet clearly defined. In this chapter it is proposed to consider the main issues relating to control and accountability and modes of evaluating the school system.

Demand for Community Control

There is at the present time a trend in a number of countries to reduce the central power in education in favour of community or neighbourhood control. Local versus state or federal power over schools is a conflict that was resolved far back in the political history of many OECD countries. That is not to imply that no evolution in the balance of power has been possible. Member countries where local authority over school systems prevailed from the beginning provide evidence of the yielding of power to the state or federal government or, more frequently, the assumption of control by the state or federal government over new areas of policy making and over new programmes and the structuring and merging of local education authorities. On the whole, however, the original principles on which agreement was reached have remained intact.

In recent years, there has been a growing demand in some OECD countries for community control over the schools — Italy (the school of Barbiana), the United

States (minority groups), Australia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden — and in many countries the issue is now under discussion. It is to be noted that this applies as much to countries with decentralised as with centralised educational administrations. In other words, the control of the schools by local government does not apparently guarantee that the community feels involved in the decision-making process.

The reasons for the increasing demand for community control over the schools vary from one OECD country to another. In some countries, the demand originates in the desire of pressure or minority groups for full control over their own schools following their disillusionment with prevailing practice. In other countries, the origin is not directly connected with one particular policy or one particular group in society but rather with a widening politicisation of educational issues and a growing sensitivity of citizens towards the objectives and outcomes of schooling. In several countries, the radical critique of the conserving role of the school vis-à-vis the prevailing social order has also been instrumental in provoking a lively debate about who should control the schools.

In several OECD countries, consultative councils have been set up in order to widen participation in those areas of decision-making which higher authorities leave to each school (areas usually still quite limited). Representatives of teachers, parents and pupils are commonly found in such councils, although the views of teacher representatives tend in practice to be especially influential because of their full-time professional involvement in the life of the school. There are examples of such councils in Norway, Italy, France and Sweden (yet to be fully implemented). In several Australian states, recent policy decisions and legislation have supported the setting up of school councils or boards comprising representatives of teachers, parents and, in some instances, students, though the power of these boards tends to be limited to the supply and maintenance of accommodation and equipment, co-ordination of school and community educational needs, exchanges of views, and the distribution of special grants. The Australian federal government has encouraged this trend by making special grants available. In Spain, there are sharp differences of view between the main political parties about how far authority in the education system should be decentralised, but all favour some measure of decentralisation. Legislation now under consideration by the National Assembly will, if enacted, establish a board of governors for each school which will include the school principal, the head of studies, three parent representatives, three teacher representatives, a representative of the non-teaching staff, and an appointee of the municipal authority. The board's responsibility will be : to approve the school rules, supervise curriculum planning, ensure that rules of pupil admission are followed, intervene or participate in economic management, plan cultural and extra-mural activities, co-operate with other schools, and assist and advise the school principal.

The hope that such consultative councils will promote pedagogic renewal by stimulating discussion, self-examination, and practical initiatives is one of the main reasons for this "participation" trend. Most of them are so new, however, that it is too early to assess their impact. Certainly, some of the measures have been widely criticised as ill-planned or inadequate.

Parental rights

In general terms, the legitimacy of compulsory schooling is based on two pillars : a mandate from the public authority on behalf of the collective good and a delegated power from parents with children attending school. In some countries, the delegated power from the parents is given heavy stress — Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United States. Thus, the Irish Constitution affirms :

> "The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious, moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children. Parents shall be free to provide this education in their homes or in private schools or in schools recognised or established by the State. The State shall provide for free primary education and shall endeavour to supplement and give reasonable aid to private and corporate educational initiative, and, *when the public good requires it,* provide other educational facilities with due regard, however, for the rights of parents, especially in the matter of religious and moral education."

Similar far-reaching guarantees for parents to provide or to have provided education for their children appear in the Dutch Constitution ; moreover, the State is obliged to accord private education full financial parity with public education.

France affords a striking exception to the above rule. There, the national parents' associations are treated as partners in educational policy deliberations. Even at the level of the individual parent and school, parental influence can be far from negligible and, indeed, it is probably stronger than in many less centralised systems. Thus, paradoxical as it may seem, the direct involvement of parents in the centralised public school system of France may be stronger than in the private school sector of the Netherlands, where on paper each school board representing the parents is almost fully autonomous.

Recognition of parents' rights over the education of their children does not imply that in practice parents or their representatives control and manage the schools. Parents' direct involvement tends to diminish the more one goes from private to public and from locally governed to national school systems. There are exceptions : in private schools the school board may consist largely of parents but without the active engagement of the average parent in his or her children's education. In the Netherlands, for example, it appears that parents with children in the public system frequently intervene more than parents with children in private schools, despite the fact that in the latter parents have a much greater responsibility for maintaining their own denominational schools. Is it that parents choose this school rather than that because they have full confidence in its capacity to serve their child's needs ?

Neither have the constitutional prerogatives of parents in the education of their children led everywhere to a corresponding legal provision for parents' participation in the running of the schools. In Germany and in Ireland, two countries where parents' rights have weighed heavily in the history of educational policy-making and of control and management, the parents' direct influence on the schools in which their children are enrolled is very small. The force of history, however, is a factor in Germany in the case of the discussion around the "all-day" school.

The interaction between school and community is an essential element in the present debate around compulsory schooling, if only because many other important issues can only be satisfactorily dealt with if school and community relations are given a new impetus. This applies, for example, to the accountability issue, to the demand for closer alignment of the curriculum with the real needs and concerns of each neighbourhood, to the demand for school-based curriculum development, to the introduction of new subjects such as environmental studies and road safety in the curriculum, and to the maintenance of a school in a community at a time of declining birth rates.

Control and educational innovation

Whether educational innovation is better served by decentralised control and management or by centralised educational government is an open question. It is

often argued that local power tends to be more in favour of maintaining the *status quo* than central power and that major reforms are more often than not initiated from the centre against local hesitation and resistance. At the same time, local control, centred on each school, may be a necessary condition for pedagogic renewal because sustained effort to improve classroom practice is the result of hard work by committed teachers, ideally supported in their effort by other parties directly concerned with the work of the school.

But local control is hardly a sufficient condition for innovatory pedagogy, nor does it solve the problem of how to speed up the diffusion of valuable practices. There are constraints of the sort mentioned by Stenhouse (1975 : 170-171).

> "The control problem of the school, its moralism and need for rectitude, and the strain which genuine innovation places on the identity and competence of teachers seem to me to be major barriers to be faced by any school attempting innovation. There are also problems in the organisation of schools... The school has a hierarchy of power and status. Curriculum and organisational change disturbs the allocation of status. Integration threatens the power base of departments. The introduction of new subjects increases the competition for resources and may create new opportunities for promoted posts. Pastoral emphasis also creates new power structures."

Community control of schools may therefore fail to bring about much change. And when change occurs, there is no guarantee that it will please centrally placed "experts". It is often noted that many teachers, parents and pupils are conservative in their educational views in that they value conventional teaching styles, subject-based curricula, marks and examinations more than professed reformers do.

Neither among professional educators nor among lay persons is there a very clear consensus about educational ends and means. Compared to some other institutions, schools are remarkably sheltered from the need to change in particular directions in order to adapt to environmental imperatives. This is especially true of compulsory schooling, which has a guaranteed supply of pupils. From the point of view of central policymakers favouring certain changes in classroom practice (e.g. child-centred activity pedagogy, team teaching) but unable to effect much change by means of a Planning, Research, Development, and Diffusion strategy, decentralisation in order to promote "pedagogic renewal" is therefore fraught with risk.

The inference is that a distinction should be drawn between types and scopes of innovations. Major changes in structure and curriculum may be more easily initiated from the centre, whereas innovation in the daily life of the school may be better initiated at the school level. On the other hand, centrally initiated and steered innovation may never reach the classroom level.

Local control is not synonymous with the grassroots from which initiatives for educational innovation may most readily stem. Whatever the distribution of control and management responsibilities between central, state and local authorities may be, ways have to be found to allow these initiatives to be developed and translated into practical and, for the teachers and the pupils, acceptable guidelines. Obviously, this requires that schools, teachers, parents and, wherever possible, pupils as well, participate in decisions concerning any educational innovation that directly concerns them. This can be done by setting up consultative school councils at the school level, though they may not always be effective. More generally, this raises the issue of the autonomy or semi-autonomy of schools vis-à-vis local, state and central authorities.

The issue of decentralisation of control and management over education is at the heart of the educational innovation issue. It has been observed that decentralisation as generally practised is primarily organisational, in other words facilitating local participation or school participation in the implementation of

already determined innovations. Decentralisation in fact serves to maintain the existing political power structure.

In compulsory schooling this issue has a particular importance in view of the type and level of resources that schools in this sector are themselves able to mobilise. What is possible with teachers and pupils at the post-compulsory level may not be possible with primary school teachers and pupils. On the other hand, compulsory school teachers are often better trained in pedagogical matters than their colleagues in post-compulsory schools and more motivated to invest in educational innovation. The crucial problem is that of involving teachers in educational innovation over the whole front *ab initio,* particularly when innovation has been initiated at the central level and perhaps from outside the education system.

A Demand for Accountability

People have complained about the shortcomings of schooling ever since public education came into existence. The extent, however, to which "the education system" and its members are now held accountable for the alleged failures of formal education is new. Demands for more visible forms of accountability have become vociferous in some countries, thereby increasing the importance of evaluation principles and instruments. At the same time, evaluation risks becoming impoverished because of the narrow focus of popular accountability demands on particular, rather than general, education problems.

It cannot be too strongly stressed, however, that only 6 out of 15 of the national studies on compulsory schooling explicitly mention an accountability issue. Nor is the concept well-defined.

Accountability is not a major issue in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. In Sweden this may be due to the existence of strong parliamentary control and in Denmark to the long-established tradition of community participation in schools. Both parliamentary control and community participation have been suggested as appropriate responses in countries where accountability has become an issue.

Because the key issues differ from country to country it is necessary to explore functional rather than conceptual or institutional similarities. It is problems, not definitions, that finally matter. Here the focus will be on the relationship between accountability and evaluation. For this purpose accountability is defined as the social obligation to justify practice and has to be interpreted in relation both to specific responsibilities or tasks and defined patterns of control. Evaluation, on the other hand, concerns the repertoire of criteria and methods for collecting, organising, assessing and reporting evidence. Its purpose is to help education authorities to answer accountability requests with some objectivity.

Accountability is not a one-way relationship. Responsibilities and the resources needed for discharging them have to be negotiated with different parties both within and outside the system since the success of "the system" depends on the co-operation of all those concerned with it. In the past, teachers often complained about pupils who were either unwilling or unable to profit from the instruction offered to them. Pupils who failed to pass selective examinations were held accountable for not achieving the goals of compulsory schooling. Today, the accountability relationship has become reversed. Parents and "the public" reproach schools when many of the young generation seem to experience failure or their own children do not succeed. It is increasingly seen as the duty of the system and the individual teacher to adapt the curriculum to the needs and capabilities of the pupils.

School accountability

There is a sharp distinction to be drawn between governmental accountability for the system both at national and local levels and the accountability of the

individual school. An essential element in this distinction is that governments can control the level of resources whereas schools have little or no control over the level of resources and only a circumscribed control over their deployment. For example, something like four-fifths of educational expenditure in schools is on teaching staff. Theoretically, government could change that percentage if it thought fit but in practice the school must accept the number of teachers assigned to it, may have only a limited involvement in their selection and appointment and can only deploy them in a limited number of different ways depending in part upon the nature of the teachers' training and experience. The school may vary the proportion of "class contact time" of teachers and decide how to deploy the rest of their available time. It can for example choose to maximise class contact time, to keep class size at a minimum on the assumption that this is the best way for a school to carry out both its academic and its "pastoral" role, or it can decide that the demands of counselling, careers advice and pastoral work in general require that a substantial proportion of staff time should be reserved exclusively for it. But, while it can change the deployment of staff time, it cannot usually decide to switch resources by deciding, say, to spend less on teachers and more for example on equipment or additional buildings.

Clearly the degree of accountability must depend to a considerable degree upon the extent to which the school has freedom of choice in the deployment of resources. But it is to be remembered that in addition to accountability strictly geared to the use of resources, schools must also be accountable for their use of pupils' time during the *compulsory* stage of education. And in this, schools have different degrees of freedom under different systems. In several countries, apart from the constraints imposed by public expectations, by the specialisms and experience of available teachers, and by the syllabuses of public examinations, in particular for older pupils, the school has a considerable amount of control over the ways in which it plans and organises its work. It has already been suggested that that control should involve negotiation with parents and representatives of the community — and perhaps pupils themselves — and that the school's accountability to parents and to the community for the curriculum and life of the school is closely linked with this process of negotiation. Accountability is expressed primarily in the form of information conveyed to those who need or require it in a form acceptable to them, and satisfying them that their expectations are being both understood and met as far as is possible.

Evaluation Responses

The unprecedented demand for accountability stems from quite different sources, reflecting distinct concerns :

i) dissatisfaction with the effects of recent educational reforms ;
ii) conflicts about goals and principles ;
iii) disputes about the efficacy of controversial educational theories and programmes ;
iv) the cost effectiveness of schooling.

The cost-effective factor particularly weighs with national education authorities.

The response to these different concerns has to be both convincing and flexible and this entails the development of efficient evaluation procedures. Of course, evaluation is nothing new. Teachers have always attempted to identify the learning difficulties and to measure the progress of their pupils through close observation and the correction of exercises ; schools regularly provide reports on each pupil for parents ; in several systems, for example the German Länder or Portugal, textbooks are reviewed ; in many systems inspectors have long monitored the effectiveness of schools and teachers. What is new about evaluation is the need to differentiate roles

and refine methods. Division of labour can lead to greater success in dealing with specific tasks and reduce the workload of the teacher in the classroom and the administrator at his desk.

Evaluation Instruments

In seeking to answer the questions posed above governments organise a variety of methods of evaluation which may include the collection of statistics, examinations and testing, the use of an inspectorate, evaluation by researchers and the monitoring and assessment of programmes.

Educational statistics

The main purpose of educational statistics is to provide quantitative information, for example about the number of pupils of different ages, the number and forms of training of their teachers, the number and type of institutions in which education takes place. They do not reveal much about quality — the standard of upkeep of buildings, the appropriateness of their design for their use, the total area available for different purposes and the standard of equipment. While statistics serve primarily to provide "input" measures, they can also offer some fairly crude output measures. If one index of the success of an education system is the participants' wish for more, then statistics about participation rates after the compulsory period of school attendance in sixth form, further education and higher education are one such measure. But it must be used with caution. They may well be people who at 16 or 18 say in effect "yes, I am very satisfied with the education I have had, it has given me what I need and now I want to get out of it to do something else". A decision to leave the education system may not be an indication of dissatisfaction, nor is a decision to stay on necessarily a positive vote of confidence — it may be a second best, as pointed out above in Chapter VII, especially in days of high unemployment.

Public examinations

Public examinations results may be used with some caution to reveal, for example, the number and proportion of pupils reaching certain standards subject by subject from one year to another. But it is always dangerous to use something for a purpose for which it was not intended. The purpose of a public examination is to assess the performance of an individual student at the end of a course of study. That assessment is often used predictively in relation to his future education or employment, and there are many who would doubt the validity of doing so since the examinations were never intended to predict future performance but to sum up and describe present performance. Still less were they designed for use in monitoring or evaluating the system through which the student has passed. Moreover, the stability of examination standards over time has been challenged and certainly cannot be taken for granted.

Nevertheless examinations can be a useful output measure provided that their limitations for this secondary purpose are recognised. In particular, to use examination performance as one measure of the effectiveness of the education system is one thing. To use it to compare the effectiveness of different institutions or even different areas of the country is another. The latter can only be misleading except in association with a large amount of information with which it is possible to interpret examination performance in relation to the kind of pupils and circumstances in which they learn. Elsewhere more centralised forms of examining

or the use of more standardised types of test may make comparison more valid and even facilitate the monitoring of changes of performance over time : but, again, only in respect of a proportion of the school population.

Testing programmes

Large-scale testing with different functions has recently been initiated mainly in the Anglo-Saxon countries. National or state-wide testing programmes based on light sampling of pupils aim at producing achievement profiles over different areas of the curriculum for the whole country or rather broad sub-categories (e.g. boys vs. girls, rural vs. urban schools). They are also intended to compare levels of achievement over time. With the aid of matrix sampling, they can cover a broad range of competencies and sub-skills. Such programmes focus on :

— checking folklore evidence on the effectiveness of compulsory schooling ;
— pin-pointing areas of schooling where improvement or additional support is needed.

Other programmes focus on a smaller number of tests (usually in basic skills) and are applied to the whole age group. They aim at smaller geographical or institutional units and primarily serve :

— to complement less standardised forms of pupil examination ;
— to focus educational activities on key goals.

At present only few findings have emerged from these programmes and no consistent trends appear. The utility and methodical adequacy of large-scale testing is highly controversial and raises several issues.

The first issue is the selection and weighting of goals and the definition of significant levels of achievement. Friction between the curriculum and the testing system has to be avoided. Central tests should not override regional, local or school control over the curriculum in decentralised systems.

Second, it is difficult to operationalise the goals and to measure the effects of schooling. The more complex the outcomes of schooling, the less susceptible they are to standardised testing. Testing should not favour particular styles of curriculum planning and instruction based on behavioural objectives over more process-oriented styles of teaching and long-term goals of education. In particular, the testing of basic competencies has to be complemented by evidence covering a broader range of possible outcomes and side-effects. This presupposes softer evaluation approaches than have to be included in an overall assessment. More recent testing programmes are already attempting to increase their sensitivity but the scope for internal improvement has its limits. Other appraisals, such as reports from advisors, have to complement testing.

Testing programmes cannot take into account the conditions under and the processes through which certain aspirations have been or have not been achieved. A more ecological approach to evaluation is probably required. The interplay between different factors leading to certain accomplishments has to be investigated. This would increase the fairness of accountability and enable decision-makers to take remedial action.

Finally, no one method or research tradition, such as psychological testing, can cover the whole range of information needs or claim exclusive validity for its instruments. Survey studies of few selected variables over a large number of pupils and contexts have to be complemented by more intensive case studies of a few selected institutions covering a large number of variables and yielding more comprehensive functional patterns of schooling under certain circumstances. This will also help to link accountability at the system level to school or classroom accountability fostering teacher development and institutional self-study.

Testing by local authorities of levels of pupils' performance appears to be a growing practice. It has the obvious advantage, from the point of view of the local administrator, of offering an "objective" standard by which to assess the effectiveness of schools. It also has its dangers. Teachers have sometimes seen themselves and their work publicly judged without regard to the different circumstances which can make identical results in test terms a triumph over obstacles in one school and a totally inadequate level of achievement in another. Others have attacked the system as an improper way of attempting to assess the effectiveness of education, based as it is on an "output" model which they would consider inappropriate, and concentrating on only that small part of the output which is most easily and cheaply measurable.

Teachers and their unions do not in general fear or resent judgements made on adequate grounds by those whom they regard as fellow professionals, whether other teachers, local advisers or inspectors. They do, however, both fear and resent the ill-informed judgements and comparisons that too easily arise from a simplistic interpretation of test results by lay folk. Even when confidentiality is ensured, there are pressures which arise from local testing that do not arise from national testing. Local authorities are the employers of their teachers, and their advisers, unlike inspectors, play a part in the appointment and promotion of staff. It is all too easy for the teacher who lacks self-confidence to take short cuts to ensure that the performance of his pupils is to his credit by devoting a disproportionate amount of time and effort to those aspects of performance which are measured by the tests used.

The role of inspectorates

Of all the monitoring instruments the use of inspectorates is probably the one which has undergone most change in recent years but which offers the fewest commonalities among OECD countries. It is also the one about which information is most difficult to obtain and into which very little research has been undertaken. The increasing interest in the issue of educational administration in some of the European Member countries, a movement in which school inspectors play a role, seems, however, to indicate a greater interest in the political implications of control and management.

The tasks of the inspectors vary from exercising mere administrative and statutory control to monitoring and advising. Their range of competence varies from the extensive, in, for example, Australia, Belgium and France, to the marginal in many other countries. In France, the inspectorate has a direct responsibility for curriculum development, the implementation of structural innovations, in-service training of teachers, teachers' evaluation, teachers' appointments and promotion and sundry other matters. In most other countries the inspectors' tasks are more modest. Instead of being an integral part of the educational administration, they are usually confined to reporting and giving advice to the school administration at the local education authority, the state or the federal-national level.

There is an increasing tendency to extend the inspectors' advisory role downwards to the schools and the teachers. Whereas the "upward" advisory role concerns primarily administrative problems and to a less extent educational and pedagogical issues, the "downward" role is primarily an educational one. However, in many countries, the traditional inspector has not been trained for this new task and has not been recruited according to educational criteria. As a result, the "downward" tendency pertains for the time being more to the domain of wishful thinking than to that of reality.

The above tendency could easily enter into conflict with another observable tendency, namely that of a greater centralisation of the inspectoral function in order

to make the inspectorate a more efficient reporting and signalling instrument on behalf of central administration and policy-making. The fact that the inspectorate comes under the direct authority of central administration (whether national, state or school district) explains why policy-makers and top administrators sometimes tend to bypass other advisory, innovation and research bodies over which they do not have direct or full control and to rely on the inspectorate to provide services for which the former may be professionally better qualified.

In some Member countries each level of educational administration disposes of its own inspectors. This applies in particular to the United Kingdom and the United States. Each inspectorate has its specific tasks, in line with the authority of the relevant administration over the school system. The French inspectorate with its distinct functions for the national inspectorate and the inspectorate at the level of the "académies" deserves special attention in view of the importance of the role played by the national inspectorate in educational policy and innovation.

Inspectorate systems represent an attempt to integrate a professional model of evaluation into a framework of legal-administrative control. Flexibility is the particular strength of this assessment strategy. There are, however, serious tensions between the legal and the professional tradition of evaluation. A balance between the diagnostic feedback and the authoritative control component of evaluation can be struck only by differentiating them into different roles and procedures.

Cost-benefit analysis

The main criteria for evaluation in this sense are the utility of schooling for well-defined purposes and the productivity of given resources. Such evaluation is a necessary counterpart to the other modes mentioned so far. It has been strongly resisted by educationalists, however, and has encountered major difficulties in practice, mainly because the effects of education are not easily specified in advance and outcomes and inputs cannot be measured as precisely as the production rate of a factory. Nevertheless, the broad idea behind cost-benefit analysis may merit wider application. Broadly interpreted, costs not only imply financial expenditure but also such intangible factors as, for example :

- the emotional side-effects of a programmed reading course ;
- the motivational exhaustion of teachers bombarded by new curricula ;
- absenteeism rates in compulsory schooling ;
- examination anxieties.

Such side-effects tend to be undervalued or simply overlooked by evaluators. The alleged pay-offs of innovations in particular have to be related to the money, time, energy and goodwill demanded from numerous people in the system. On the other hand, the latent costs of well-established practice are often taken for granted. It has to be acknowledged that this area of evaluation is still largely unexplored or explicitly avoided by educational evaluation. Attitudinal as well as methodical changes thus become necessary. For example :

i) educators have to accept that their work is partly determined by the resources available and that it is essential to account for their economic use ;

ii) the public and its representatives, on the other hand, have to recognise that economic models and methods can represent only to a limited degree what is important in education ;

iii) evaluators have to become more imaginative in developing approximative measures for variables deemed important in schooling by educators and their clients.

Moreover, evaluation itself has to become more cost-effective. Data available in official statistics and other sources (e.g. school records) have to be utilised. Schools already complain about over-testing and questionnaire overload. Accountability will further increase this burden if care is not taken to economise the business of data collection.

The school's Response

Schools have tended to provide information in many different ways. Some produce prospectuses providing parents of potential pupils with information about buildings, staff, curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Most schools arrange some form of public occasion annually (speech-day, prize-day, open-day) when a report on the year's work is given, but this all too often focuses attention on the exploits of a minority of pupils and of the community in which it is placed. Many schools send parents reports on the progress of their children, but this form of communication is often criticised as being uninformative and unhelpful. Most schools supplement reports by giving parents the opportunity of meeting the staff who teach their children to discuss rather more fully their progress to date and the curricular choices that may lie before them.

But none of this amounts to an adequate pattern of accountability because it is too one-sided, offered solely in the school's terms and not as a result of negotiation, too fragmented and fails to differentiate between the legitimate variety of client groups. McDonald (n.d.) offers a list of items of information which schools, he claims, should make widely available, and which is more extensive than all but a few schools offer at present :

i) names, qualifications and relevant occupational experience of the staff, and their institutional responsibilities ;
ii) similar information about local advisers and inspectors in regular touch with the school ;
iii) similar information about the board of managers or governors ;
iv) information about the systems of appointment for staff, managers or governors ;
v) information about how to lodge a complaint against the school, and about the school's procedure for dealing with complaints ;
vi) information about the decision-making processes of the school in relation to the distribution of responsibilities. Internal forms of accountability and procedures for reviewing practice ;
vii) rules for staff and pupils ;
viii) information about school policy with regard to the promotion of academic attainment, social life, pastoral care, and health, and how these policies are reflected in the organisation of the school and the allocation of resources ;
ix) pupil assessment, pupil records, and examination policy and career guidance. Examination results ;
x) liaison with feeder (primary) schools and institutions of further education. Liaison with parents ;
xi) income and expenditure for the current year ;
xii) staff development policy ;
xiii) extra-curricular activities ;
xiv) discipline policy and procedures for grievance ;
xv) provision for remedial teaching, and information about professional qualifications of the staff responsible.

These for the most part mirror on an individual school basis the sort of information which nationally is available through statistics. In general, it is the framework for an account, part quantitative, part descriptive, of what the school is doing. There is little or no attempt to evaluate the appropriateness of this for individual pupils or groups of pupils, the extent to which the work of the school is proving effective in ensuring that all the pupils are achieving the levels of performance of which they are capable. It is desirable that the wider range of information suggested should be made available, but this is surely inadequate without some element of evaluation.

Conclusions

Accountability is no one-way relationship. Different concerns, levels and modes of accountability constitute a network of checks and balances. Specific accountability requests have to be related to both the existing organisation of power and appropriate concepts and methods of evaluation. A differentiated accountability system is called for, which has to be complemented by more rigorous types of evaluation. The elements for a more comprehensive system and their respective strengths and shortcomings have been discussed in this chapter. It is not possible, however, to determine one best combination of elements for all countries. Accountability mechanisms in a particular country have to match existing patterns of decision-making and to respond to the prevailing philosophy of education and political culture. Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of different approaches and their adequacy in different contexts. The distinction between more prescriptive (*ex ante*) and more evaluative (*ex post*) modes of control deserves particular attention (e.g. the relationship between a soft/strict curriculum and a soft-strict examination system and their implications for accountability).

No one system or method can be recommended. It is possible, however, to define some general criteria that can help to inform balanced and responsive accountability systems. The following desiderata for accountability procedures have been developed by J. Nisbet (1978) in the United Kingdom context. These procedures :

- must operate in a way that is fair to all concerned ;
- should be valid and relevant to current concerns ;
- should provide feedback for decision-making and encourage wider involvement in decisions ;
- should either be objective or make subjectivity explicit ;
- should be verifiable, i.e. open to checking ;
- should not distort the processes of teaching and learning ;
- should be understandable and the results communicable ;
- should be comprehensive and take account of the wide variety of aspects of education.

Accountability cannot be avoided. However, administrators and teachers can strive to apply it with a view to benefiting everyday practice. They should be supported by evaluators skilled in the use of effective methods of investigation and assessment. The joint efforts of administrators, teachers and evaluators to improve the performance of schools are bound to fail, however, if the public through its elected representatives overloads the education system with accountability demands and continually exacts justification of past actions.

XI

PROBLEMS AND OPTIONS

Continuing and Emerging Problems

In preceding chapters we have attempted to identify the issues and choices that currently face education authorities in OECD countries in their efforts to consolidate and improve the efficiency of their compulsory schooling systems. In this concluding chapter we intend to focus on those existing and emerging problems, placed in no special order of priority, that seem bound to command the attention of education authorities during the next ten to twenty years.

The first problem is concerned with the growing public demand in some countries for accountability and its consequences for the locus of decision-making. What measures will reassure the public that the goals of compulsory schooling are being satisfactorily achieved, that, more specifically, the overall learning gains of pupils are being maintained or, better still, raised ? How can the central authorities apply effective accountability instruments and at the same time satisfy the parallel growing public demand for greater local autonomy in educational decision-making ?

The second problem, which is closely related to the first one, is concerned with how best to deploy resources during a coming decade when budgets are likely to be contained at their present level in real terms or even reduced. Will any advantages accrue from falling enrolments or will their impact exacerbate the resource problem ?

The third problem concerns the morale and competence of the teaching profession. How will recruitment be affected by falling enrolments ? What can be done to maintain and improve the efficiency of teachers when they will be assailed by a variety of new pressures and faced with the probable contraction of their profession ? To what extent can school-based training be generalised as an instrument for maintaining teacher vitality and creativity and for sustaining educational change under conditions of financial constraints ?

The fourth concerns the increasingly insistent public demand for a closer relationship between education and working life. By what ways and means can this be achieved ? What are the implications for the organisation and curriculum of the compulsory school of rapidly increasing participation rates in post-compulsory schooling ? Where should the compulsory school fit in with a scheme of recurrent education ? More particularly, what can be done to overcome the hard and persisting reality that for a significant proportion of youngsters (varying between 10 and 25 per cent, according to the country in question, and mainly from under-privileged groups) compulsory schooling results in seeming total failure in terms of both vocational preparation and a thirst for further study ?

The fifth is how to build on the last twenty years' experience of trying to remove educational inequality. How far is it now a question of adapting existing policies or

of devising new policies to increase educational success ? Will it be necessary to lower the age of entry into compulsory schooling ?

The sixth and last problem is concerned with the internal dynamics of the schools. Do schools make a difference in determining a child's performance as much evidence seems to demonstrate ? If so, what are the characteristics of good schools and can such characteristics be developed in all schools ?

Goals, Outcomes and the Call for Accountability

The context within which the relationships between education and societal goals has to be determined is today in a permanent state of flux. Faced with rapidly changing external demands education authorities have learnt not to over-react and to be resilient. The experience of the last twenty years of large-scale reforms has revealed that educational change is slow to accomplish, that it is not easy to escape from the consequences of previous policies or to modify established practices, and that education cannot be expected to perform social miracles. Indeed, there is now rueful recognition that in recent years society has had unrealistic expectations of education, not least in expecting it to be able to remove social inequalities. Education systems have been called upon to pursue social goals which necessitate a commitment to coordinated public policies over a broad range of sectors including income transfers, welfare, housing and health, as well as education. Nevertheless, in response to the recent criticism and external pressures policy-makers are obliged to consider how in the future to reconcile goals and outcomes to greater effect and to demonstrate that the school system is effectively accountable to public opinion.

Putting goals into practice

In short, whether they be traditional or innovative, goals have to be put into practice. Where the policy is to retain traditional goals the decision is seldom explicitly formulated ; rather, there is an unspoken reaffirmation of established practice. But decisions to modify old goals or to set new goals, however tentative, have to be transformed into guidelines that can be understood and effectively applied by those who administer and those who teach in the schools. National education goals are prescribed either explicitly in education acts and administrative directives or implicitly in sections of legislation, or through the policy decisions and declarations of intent by the State. However, three difficulties commonly arise. The first is that national goals are often formulated in such normative terms or such ambiguous language that they cannot easily be translated into educational practice. It follows, therefore, that any statement of a goal should be accompanied by a set of guidelines indicating how it might be implemented or at any rate that a goal should be defined in sufficient detail and with sufficient precision as to ensure that subsequent progress or lack of progress towards it may be measured convincingly. The second difficulty is how to organise the curriculum and the learning environment at the school level in such a way that the full range of prescribed goals may be pursued simultaneously. Very often some goals are actively pursued while others are neglected or played down. The solution can only lie in not fragmenting the curriculum into discrete compartments, each of which is related to a particular goal, but in pursuing multiple goals for each process and activity. The third difficulty has to do with creating a public consensus about goals. As a rule, most individuals and groups in society have ideas about what they expect from the performance of the education system but they are often hard put to define *a priori* goals. This leads to the situation described in Chapter I on Goals and Functions in which educators are chastised for their shortcomings but seldom or never given constructive proposals on which to act. Conscious of this dissonance many

education authorities now seek to obtain broad public agreement about new or revised educational goals by engendering wide-ranging debate at the national and local level prior to formulating them. We believe that efforts to stimulate public discussion of educational aims and problems should be intensified so that *post hoc* recriminations may be averted.

Setting guidelines

Two "models" for guidelines are clearly differentiated in two recent publications by national ministries, each embodying the control arrangements of the countries concerned. One is incorporated in a report from England and Wales "Education in Schools : A Consultative Document" (London, July 1977) which lists a number of lines of development of innovative goals within which schools are offered a range of alternative strategies for adopting and implementing the goals, involving a substantial degree of professional autonomy. In contrast to this is the French Ministry of Education document "The knowledge and abilities acquired through compulsory schooling" in which a series of specific and precisely defined innovative goals concerning levels of attainment are outlined. Here the emphasis is not so much on professional autonomy but a professional agreement about practice reached before publication of the document.

There are many variations on these models. In the United States, for example, the federal (national) government helps to finance major policy innovations in fields such as desegregation, disadvantage and schooling for the handicapped. But control and management of the mainstream school system remains firmly in state and district hands. The professional teacher associations play an important role in determining and implementing goals at both national and local level.

Centralisation or decentralisation

Putting goals into practice necessarily raises the question : where should lie the locus of decision-making in education ? Many signs have recently appeared that governments are on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, they are being asked to ensure that the schools should be demonstrably accountable for the efficiency of their performance to those who fund them, that is, the taxpayers. On the other hand, there is both a democratic — that is, taxpayers' — demand for more local decision-making and power to innovate together with a growing recognition, sustained by research findings, that school-based initiatives tend to make for good schools. Yet governments cannot realistically be expected to ensure tighter accountability without tightening centralised controls, as has been done for example in the United States :

> "Despite the imposing structure of school governance at the State level, until recently most of the education decision-making occurred at local levels. Now there is definitive evidence of a recentralization of educational management to the State level which is taking place during the current period of increased development of management technologies. Many States, often with the aid of federal funding, have installed sophisticated planning systems for needs assessments, objective writing, tracking devices and program evaluations. This technology has allowed States to move extensively into State-wide testing and the monitoring of State mandated or approved management objectives. They are using this knowledge to devise new strategies for addressing the educational needs of the disadvantaged."

But how are governments supposed to tighten central controls without frustrating the movement towards locally based decision-making which many of them endorse ?

Many countries are now facing this dilemma as they reexamine their control mechanisms for implementing the goals of compulsory schooling. An increase in local decision-making, including school-based initiatives, need not be antithetical to hierarchical relationships but it does have implications for who is accountable to whom and for what. Above all, it requires that the lines of accountability be reciprocal. The search for appropriate procedures and processes for engaging interested groups at all levels in hammering out educational decisions is likely to be a significant task for the 1980s. For the way in which educational provision is organised and managed at all levels of government is the responsibility of the entire society. Yet, it is the inescapable duty of the central authority to establish effective means for maintaining, assessing and monitoring the quality of education across the nation.

Resource Deployment and the Impact of Falling Enrolments

The criticism of educational policies and practices discussed in Chapter I is being voiced in many countries against a background of more or less severe restrictions on educational expenditures entailed by the economic recession. In the past, financial retrenchment was certainly bothersome to public education authorities because it raised the problem of how and where to make savings, but it was rarely accompanied by any fundamental questioning of the internal autonomy of the education system. Today the situation is different and likely to remain so as governments, politicians and special interest groups become more and more prone to indicate where they perceive failure and where improvements should be made.

Resources and qualitative inputs

To measure material inputs into the schools is relatively easy. By definition such inputs are quantifiable and governments can, and very largely do, try to equalize quantifiable inputs throughout their jurisdiction : types and square footage of buildings ; standard training for teachers ; pupil/teacher ratios ; class size ; total expenditure per pupil ; expenditure on staff per pupil ; supplies of equipment. What cannot easily be measured is quality, above all, how individual teachers perform in the classroom.

And the qualitative dimension appears to be the critical factor in distinguishing one school from another. In ten national case studies on the financing of primary education, recently prepared for OECD, it is remarkable how consistently the authors, coming from widely differing backgrounds and representing different political ideologies, express doubts about the existence of a strong connection between financial inputs and predictable outcomes and about the feasibility of effecting change simply by providing more material resources (OECD/CERI, 1979*a*, 1977, 1979*b*, 1979*c*).

Standards and resources

This scepticism appears to counter the widely held and what might seem commonsensical view that variations in standards or student achievements can largely be explained by variations in resource inputs, in other words, that a lack of resources necessarily leads to low standards. It does not justify, however, a system of financing which tolerates gross disparities in the inputs to a nation's schools. Social justice requires that each school and hence each individual should receive the same treatment as specified, for example, in the legislation of the State of Florida :

"Guarantee to each student in the Florida public school system the availability of programs and services appropriate to his educational needs, which are

substantially equal to those available to any similar student, notwithstanding geographic differences and varying local economic factors" (OECD/CERI, 1979*b* : 77).

In Finland and Norway the authorities maintain many very small rural schools at very high cost vis-à-vis urban schools.

Targeting of resources on the disadvantaged

Many governments, as we have already seen, have recently tried conscientiously to give exceptional assistance to children who are categorised as being in some way disadvantaged. The question still to be satisfactorily resolved, however, is what are the criteria to be used in defining need. The ideal approach would be one which assured assistance to each and every disadvantaged child. In practice, this is difficult to achieve, especially when resources are less than boundless. It must be added that whatever the defects of targeting by means of economic criteria, targeting by means of individual criteria is a very uncertain instrument. First, it implies administering a nationwide test to pin-point under-achieving children no matter where they live. Second, to rely on academic performance may well serve as a disincentive to try hard to local authorities likely to lose income if their pupils perform well. Third, it may lead to the dilution rather than concentration of scarce resources. The usual approach has been, therefore, to adopt economic criteria and to allocate additional resources to schools in districts where the income level is well below the national average.

Many educationists argue further that although teachers must be expert at diagnosing and dealing with individual differences among their pupils, it is

> "in practice through the general ethos and operations of the school that effective educational programmes come about... The critical factor is "the chemistry of the school" — how the principal and staff behave, their attitudes towards the students and relations with parents. It therefore seems that the additional resources required by a school having an abnormal proportion of disadvantaged children may not necessarily best be directed towards special programmes for individual children but rather towards improving the whole atmosphere of the school — in this context the provision of a swimming pool might be a perfectly legimitate expenditure" (OECD, 1980*a* : 108).

We will return to the importance of the school ethos at the end of this chapter.

Equalisation among local authorities

Wherever educational funding is decentralised, as, for example, in the United States, Australia, Canada and Yugoslavia, there tends to be a more or less profound underlying inequality of expenditure among a nation's schools. This renders the task of governments dedicated to equalisation of inputs extremely difficult. Local authorities with high educational expenditures may be displeased to see or will simply oppose national resources being skewed towards authorities with low educational expenditures. The problem is compounded when there exists no national salary scale for teachers, for then the poorer local authorities may well be tempted to devote any additional resources that they receive to raising teachers' salaries rather than to concentrate them on the disadvantaged.

One solution or at least partial solution to the equalisation of funding has been found by Yugoslavia where the revenue of each compulsory school is derived from strictly local taxes. However, at the level of each republic there exists a solidarity fund which is so distributed as to ensure a minimum level of provision in all schools. At the federal level, there is yet another solidarity fund which can be applied to assist particularly disadvantaged local authorities in the poorer republics.

The idea of vouchers

Adherence to the principle of parental freedom to choose which school to send their children to, allied with the general trend towards local decision-making has led to proposals in some countries, from politicians and special interest groups alike, that public funds for education in the form of vouchers should be made available to parents so that they can decide for themselves which school or schools their children should attend. If, as seems not unlikely, the call for freedom of parental choice becomes stronger, education authorities will need to be forearmed with policy responses which, while allowing that freedom, do not compromise the important educational goal of equality. For the danger is real that a voucher system will work in favour of the already privileged to the detriment of the culturally disadvantaged.

Redistribution of resources among educational sectors

In many countries expenditure per student is considerably lower for compulsory schooling than for other educational sectors and for the primary as opposed to the lower secondary cycle. The widest disparities between countries are found by comparing the costs of a higher-education (university) student and a primary pupil. In Finland this ratio is barely 2:1 and in Canada about 3:1, but it is about etherlands (see Table 6). The question arises whether there is a case for shifting resources from other sectors of education so as to raise expenditure on compulsory schooling. The answer might well be affirmative in any country where there is a critical amount of under-achievement at the compulsory school level and a corresponding determination to ensure that all young people will have acquired adequate basic knowledge and skills on leaving school.

Impact of falling enrolments

The resource problem is bound to be compounded by the consequences for school enrolments of the declining birth rate. In effect, governments have four options in face of falling enrolments during a period of economic recession :

i) to maintain resources at the present level ;
ii) to reduce resources but not in proportion with the decline in enrolments ;
iii) to reduce resources in more or less exact proportion with declining enrolments ;
iv) to reduce resources absolutely.

Which of these choices a government opts for will reflect its social priorities, that is, how much value it places on publicly provided and subsidised non-public schooling as against other national priorities.

While it is perfectly reasonable to postulate that if only educational planners and administrators, principals and teachers will exercise sufficient creativity and ingenuity, qualitative improvements are possible, even without any increase in the level of resources, it is no less evident that an increase in resources may well facilitate such improvements. This report comes down, therefore, in favour of the first option. The additional resources made available could be applied to a variety of purposes such as lowering teacher-pupil ratios, abandoning old school buildings in favour of new ones, expanding pre-school facilities, increasing the supply of books and teaching aids, intensifying in-service teacher training and more actively implementing multi-cultural policies. At the same time, in the light of evidence gleaned from the national reports and from the ten case studies on the financing of primary schools prepared for OECD/CERI it would appear that additional resources would have most effect if used for selective qualitative changes rather than across-the-board increases in quantitative inputs. What is certain is that the schools

Table 6. **Comparative costs per pupil or student in different levels of education, 1965-1976**[1]

Cost per pupil in primary education = 100

	1965	1970	1972	1974	1976
GERMANY[2]					
Vocational and technical secondary	56	59	58	57	63
Higher	650	650	563	467	410
AUSTRALIA					
Public secondary			175	169	160
CANADA					
Pre-primary	49	51	51	51	51
1st cycle secondary	119	115	110	108	107
2nd cycle secondary	162	165	159	157	151
Non-university higher	230	214	215	212	186
University higher	432	441	420	376	314
DENMARK[3]					
Pre-primary				58	45
6th year of basic school				144	139
9th year of basic school				171	154
2nd cycle secondary				262	213
Basic year metallurgical studies				405	314
University: Arts				174	142
Sciences				698	555
Medicine[4]				535	450
Technical				1 101	874
Primary teacher training				311	270
SPAIN[5]					
Pre-primary					81[6]
Second cycle secondary (General)		180	118	274	172[6]
Second cycle secondary (Vocational)					131[6]
Special					242[6]
UNITED STATES					
Primary and secondary					
Higher public	162	162	156	123	144
Higher private	216	218	212	170	195
FINLAND					
Preprimary	112	110	112	111	110
1st cycle secondary	96	95	92	89	91
2nd cycle secondary	144	175	172	161	138
Non-University higher	100	130	128	122	96
University higher	248	235	212	194	167
IRELAND					
1st and 2nd cycles general secondary	143	196	191	183	187
1st and 2nd cycles vocational secondary	225	300	238	213	255
Non-university higher	500	607	568	638	533
University higher	640	645	670	774	681
Special	350	345	341	340	340
JAPAN					
Pre-primary	58	65		68	
1st cycle secondary	103	110		111	
2nd cycle secondary	131	136		136	
Higher	1 198	748		605	
Special	741	762		827	
NEW ZEALAND					
Pre-primary	35	26	21	24	32
Secondary	178	193	192	184	161
Technical	343	342	330	348	411
Teacher training	1 632	1 165	1 334	1 305	1 422
University	743	599	651	651	627
Special	133	96	134	132	115
NETHERLANDS					
Pre-primary	70	68	77	78	82
General secondary	225	226	207	190	173
Technical/vocational	321	290	302	283	
Teacher training	168	204	189	185	
University	1 545	1 292	1 226	1 277	
Special	300	303	305	303	300
UNITED KINGDOM (England and Wales)					
Pre-primary	197		211	236	240
Compulsory secondary	160		159	145	142
Non-compulsory secondary	293		286	266	260
Further education					
Lower level	456		357	313	300
Advanced level	709		549	486	461
Polytechnics					
Lower-level	—		549	507	418
Advanced level	—		848	785	650
Colleges of Education	533		500	538	—
Universities[7]	1 346		1 083	842	808
Special	497		483	481	491

Table 6 (*continued*)

	1965	1970	1972	1974	1976
SWEDEN[8]					
2nd cycle secondary	106	162	126	148	119
Folk High Schools (folkhögskolorna)	158	134	139	141	121
Pre-primary teachers	119	126	124	127	97
1st cycle basic school teachers					159
2nd cycle basic school teachers		293	233	255	168
Teachers by subject					331
Special		903	597	677	653

1. Or year closest to that indicated.
2. Based on the cost per pupil in primary and general secondary.
3. Based on the cost per pupil in first year of basic school.
4. Excluding clinical training.
5. Based on the cost per pupil in primary and first-cycle secondary.
6. 1979-1980.
7. United Kingdom.
8. Based on the cost per pupil in basic school.

Source: National statistics.

cannot perform effectively if they live in constant uncertainty about the level of their future resources. They need to be assured of structural and curricular continuity and hence a predictable level of financial support.

Energy management

The effects of falling rolls are now compounded by the effects of the energy crisis. In many countries energy costs are absorbing a rapidly increasing percentage of school budgets. Many school buildings consume fuel greedily, especially those erected during the period of expansion after 1960 when energy was still cheap. Unless education authorities succeed in introducing effective conservation measures they are obliged to make cuts in some of their services such as the supply of text-books. But what conservation measures will prove effective ? Closing schools and altering the school calendar are solutions to be considered. We suggest that the search for energy savings should be a high priority at all administrative levels and above all at each school location. In passing, it is to be noted that pupils should not only be encouraged to save energy in their schools even in the smallest ways but informed why energy saving is so crucial for the well-being of their society. This calls for the development of appropriate curriculum materials. International exchanges of ideas about energy saving in the school system would no doubt be fruitful.

The Morale and Competence of the Teaching Force

Given the advent of falling enrolments and increasing pressures for changes in the curriculum and the governance of schools it will be particularly difficult during the next decade to maintain the morale and competence of the teaching force. Many teachers may find themselves under double stress. On the one hand, they will naturally feel disturbed if there are cutbacks to recruitment, blocks on promotion and talk of competency tests and redundancies in the air. On the other hand, they will be exposed to increasing pressure to diversify their functions, to modify their teaching styles, to cope with new curricular demands, and to relinquish some of their long-established autonomy.

For this reason it will be necessary to ensure that initial teacher training courses have sufficient depth, scope and flexibility to respond quickly and effectively to changes in the schools, for example the use of micro-instructional techniques and the adoption of team-teaching. It will be equally necessary to expand and to improve

the provision for professional development through in-service training so as to enable established teachers to keep up to date and to adapt to all the new demands being made upon them. Recent experiments indicate that in-service training is most effective when courses in universities or training institutions are wedded to the application of theory in the schools. School-based training appears to be particularly effective.

With increasing emphasis being attached to the importance of the working life-oriented component in the curriculum it becomes necessary to ensure that all teachers, whether specialising in academic or "vocational" subjects, have a broadly based training so that there will be no tension between general and vocational education. Does the answer lie in offering a generic core training for *all* teachers, supplemented by optional courses related to particular levels of schooling and particular subjects ?

Consideration should perhaps also be given to encouraging teacher mobility within the various sectors of education and towards other sectors of employment. Would it not be beneficial to help teachers to retrain for other occupations and to offer special training courses to enable men and women in other occupations to come into teaching ?

Changing styles and methods

Teaching styles and methods are obviously a major factor in the implementation of innovations and will more and more reflect :

i) increased attention to social education in addition to academic competences ;

ii) a departure from acquiring knowledge to acquiring learning skills and the ability to handle and use knowledge of all kinds ;

iii) increased attention to individualised learning and differentiation in the curriculum, particularly with respect to the range of ability (from gifted to slow learners) and the needs of minorities (the handicapped and the ethnically and economically disadvantaged).

Thus, initial, and especially in-service, training not only needs to prepare teachers for a flexible response to future changes but also for :

iv) the new ways of working which this study of compulsory schooling shows to be now developing ;

v) evaluating their own performance, in particular with respect to their methods and use of materials and their pupils' response to them.

Relating to Adult and Working Life

Preparation for working life has recently become a slogan which nearly all countries have felt compelled to espouse. As shown in another chapter, many reforms of school organisation, curriculum and practice have been inspired by it. All the signs are that pressure on the schools to relate closely to working life will intensify. This is partly because youth unemployment is unlikely to disappear, at least in the short term, and partly because the implications of changing technology will have to be reflected in the curriculum. Those implications are concerned not only with the impact of technology on working life and on the structure of the labour market but with the way in which advancing information technology usurps part of the school's function as the main dispenser of knowledge. Young people need to understand what it means in general terms to live in an advanced technological age and specifically what it means for each individual in choosing a career.

The curriculum and recurrent education

Youth unemployment affects with particular severity those who leave school early without the qualifications to secure or to hold a regular job. The necessity for each young person leaving school to have at least a functional command of reading, writing and numeracy skills will continue, therefore, to be a high priority. So also will be the effort to instil in each young person the importance of consolidating and updating these skills in adult life. This effort must succeed if the idea of recurrent education is not to have a regressive social effect. Recurrent education policies aim at enabling individuals to alternate throughout life between work and systematic learning experiences (either in the form of full-time or part-time schooling, or by using distance education programmes), thereby developing their knowledge and skills as the need arises. However, there is powerful evidence that the persons who are most likely to return to school and make use of improved opportunities to resume their education are those who did at least reasonably well in their initial schooling. To make opportunities for educational re-entry more abundantly available does not ensure that those deemed to be in greatest "need" will in fact make adequate use of them. Undoubtedly, economic incentives can be used as carrots but, at least as regards re-entry to full-time courses, such incentives do not generally outweigh the opportunity cost in terms of foregone income which employed individuals face, a cost that increases with age. Although such incentives may be important for the unemployed (and for unpaid housewives), they are unlikely to attract back into education those who are today anxious to leave school at the earliest possible opportunity and who will be gainfully employed in the future.

The prospect of recurrent education argues in support of school curricula and methods which develop the pupil's own capacity to continue learning after school and which integrate school-based learning more closely with life in the surrounding environment — two aims according with the child-centred curriculum advocated in this report. Thus, school should prepare pupils psychologically for lifelong learning by stressing both the "vertical" and "horizontal" integration of education, where vertical integration refers to the extension of learning in time and horizontal integration refers to the extension of learning into out-of-school life.

It can also be argued that the prospect of recurrent education implies that compulsory education should concentrate even more strongly in the future on basic literacy and numeracy skills as a necessary foundation for subsequent study throughout life. The Swedish authorities, for example, see no incompatibility between an emphasis on "basic skills" and the widening curricular implications of recurrent education just described.

Preparing pupils for recurrent education does not imply that other curricular objectives of compulsory schooling should be fundamentally altered. The notion that young people ought to acquire a sustained interest in learning throughout life is consistent with the curricular perspectives discussed in a previous chapter. "Learning how to learn" is acclaimed by all educators, whether they stress activity methods and integrated studies, education for personal and social liberation or the generalised value for cumulative learning implicit in mastery of the cognitive structures of established forms of knowledge.

Implications of the expansion of post-compulsory schooling

For a long time now a few countries have registered high participation rates in the upper secondary cycle. Most OECD countries, however, have only relatively recently registered or are only just beginning to register such rates. In this latter majority the need arises to consider the implications for the organisation and curriculum of the compulsory school. In particular : how is the balance between

general and vocational education affected ? Can examinations at the end of compulsory schooling be abolished in order to protect the wider goals of the secondary school from the short-term exigencies of the labour market ? Or can examinations be retained on condition that their capacity as *all-purpose* indicators of employability and trainability be destroyed ? How can the last two years of compulsory schooling be most effectively articulated with the upper secondary cycle ? At what stage, if any, should the schools offer vocational training for specific jobs ?

Equality of Opportunity

There appears to be no question that the pursuit of equality of educational opportunity will be not only a continuing national concern but as far as several disadvantaged groups in the population are concerned, an intensifying one. The emphasis of recent years on the lack of opportunity or inability to take advantage of the available opportunities of children from economically disadvantaged families will be sustained and new ways and means will be sought of assisting such children. At the same time, there will be greater efforts to deal with the particular needs of ethnic minorities, especially those with linguistic problems, the handicapped and those living in isolated rural areas.

Separate versus integrated schools

In striving to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged children most education authorities continue to face a structural and curricular dilemma : how to reconcile the objective of a common educational experience for all children with the need for individual differentiation which is not socially determined ? Mounting evidence is available to show that even in well-entrenched comprehensive systems with a strong egalitarian commitment, some differentiation of pupils begins to take place at least informally during the last years of compulsory schooling. The problem lies not with differentiation *per se* but rather with the value that is attached to such differentiation, which is determined by the transfer possibilities associated with each stream or subject taken. All too often, differentiation operates as a selective device for the next stage of education rather than as a faithful reflection of the pedagogical objectives of compulsory schooling.

The adoption of a multi-cultural educational policy and preservation of the cultural identity of immigrants seems to be spreading among OECD countries and within countries the financial, organisational and curricular implications of such a policy are becoming apparent. No doubt, it is costly ; for example, encouraging bilingualism entails printing textbooks in more than one language, employing extra teachers, and training teachers for second language instruction. It raises the question of how to plan appropriate methods for each cultural group without damaging social cohesiveness or impairing equal access and opportunity policies. It also raises the question of what kind of curriculum is to be adopted for each cultural group.

Each country has to develop an orchestrated educational policy for nourishing plural cultures. This is one area of education where much can be gained from examining the policies and practices of other countries and from international exchanges of ideas and experiences.

Integrating the physically and mentally handicapped to the greatest possible extent in the ordinary schools is initially a costly undertaking but one to which several countries are already committed and to which other countries show signs of becoming committed. "Initially" is a word to be stressed since maintaining schools for the handicapped is even more costly. There seems to be a strong case for countries to take one another's experiences into account with a view to obtaining

maximum benefit from financial outlays and the best available information about organisational, curricular and pedagogical solutions.

In many OECD countries children living in isolated rural and economically impoverished urban areas continue to be at an educational disadvantage vis-à-vis their peers. Removing this disadvantage will continue to be a priority.

Sex discrimination against girls is such a large issue that it has been omitted from the main body of this report. There can be no question that education systems will come under intensifying pressure to remove gender stereotyping from the schools. Thorough research investigations are called for to answer such questions as : at what stage in schools does gender stereotyping begin ? Is a majority of teachers of both sexes affected by deep-seated prejudices regarding what is fitting for girls to study and not to study at school and to be or not to be in their future careers ? Are girls' choices of subjects and future careers influenced more by out-of-school than in-school factors ?

There are signs of concern in a few national reports that the schools' preoccupation with disadvantaged and slow-achieving pupils may penalise high achieving pupils. Thus, in the United Kingdom the authorities speculate that the feeling may grow that schools should pay more attention to the special needs of the gifted, as well as those in need of special education. Again, it would be helpful to have some really convincing research evidence.

Pre-schooling and equity

The expansion of pre-schooling, which is likely to accelerate during the next few years, adds a further twist to the educational equality issue. In another section it was inferred from the information acailable that few, if any, countries now evince any intention to prolong compulsory schooling upwards ; present statutory leaving ages are likely to be retained, even though voluntary take-up of further years of schooling — usually signifying upper secondary education — will continue to augment. On the other hand, there is a distinct possibility that the *de facto* if not statutory starting age will be lowered in some countries in recognition of two factors. The first is general agreement that children can begin to learn from an early age and that, indeed, the sooner many of them do so the better it is for their intellectual and affective development, particularly if they turn out to have learning difficulties that can benefit from early diagnosis and remedial attention. The second is the increasing tendency for women to go out to work and for families to be cared for by a single working parent. At worst, more and more children of pre-school age will be placed in day care. At best, they will be given preliminary schooling in addition.

The problem for governments is whether to make sufficient facilities available for pre-school care to satisfy all the demand and, if so, to decide what its main purposes will be. This problem is overlaid by an equity concern for it is no longer disputed that, however the desired outcome is achieved, children from disadvantaged backgrounds should not start compulsory schooling already retarded alongside their peers from advantaged backgrounds. Should governments then lower the compulsory starting age for all children or — at least in the first instance — give priority in the provision of pre-schooling to disadvantaged children ?

Once governments have formally accredited the value of learning *at school* from an early age, they face similar pressure to make it generally available that has led in recent times to the upwards prolongation of compulsory schooling. Thus, if the compulsory starting age is lowered say, from six to five, how soon will a demand arise to reduce that age to four and thence to three ? It is not far-fetched to anticipate that the post-war movement which has advanced the compulsory leaving age by two or three or even four years will be paralleled by a sharp lowering of the *de facto,*

though almost certainly not compulsory, age at which children start school. How to ensure that this movement does not lead to a widening of the opportunity gap between disadvantaged and privileged children presents a major ethical challenge.

Schools Make A Difference !

Against the heretical proposition that schooling does not make much if any difference to the life chances of young people may be set two counter-propositions : *a*) different ways of organising compulsory schooling both as between countries and within countries lead to different results in terms of pupil performance and future careers ; *b*) the performance of schools varies with the ethos prevailing inside them.

The differential factors affecting the differential organisation of schooling may be expressed as a set of questions :

i) how many years are required in order that the young may be properly equipped for adult life and for what period of time should schooling be compulsory ? ;

ii) at what age should schooling begin ? ;

iii) how important is pre-schooling and how can it best be organized ? ;

iv) to what extent and in what ways should pre-schooling and primary schooling be organically linked ? ;

v) what is the significance of continuity in learning and by what means can it be secured ? ;

vi) is there an ideal age : *a*) for primary school atendance and ; *b*) lower secondary school attendance ? ;

vii) is there a case for modifying the school calendar and the distribution of the school day ? ;

viii) what is the optimum size of a ; *a*) primary school ; *b*) lower secondary school ; *c*) an all-age compulsory school ?

We have previously laid stress upon the role played by the general ethos of a given school in determining whether children are motivated to succeed or not. What makes for a favourable ethos, however, is far from easy to determine. It is not only a matter of administrative organisation, of whether schools are single sex or mixed, of the number of enrolments, of whether buildings are old or new, cramped or spacious, concentrated on a single site or dispersed. Nor is it only a matter of expenditures per pupil, teacher/pupil ratios or class sizes. In short, equal quantitative inputs into schools with a common structure and curriculum are far from guaranteeing equal outcomes.

The authors of a recent survey of twelve non-selective schools at the lower secondary level within the same local authority jurisdiction offer some clues to what characterises a successful school. A concern for academic standards is one significant factor. Success also appears to occur when teachers start classes promptly, when homework is set, when pupils find their teachers easily approachable, when there is a well-stocked and accessible library and when all the pupils are given some responsibility. The authors sum up the criteria for success succinctly and in surprisingly simple terms :

> "Schools which set good standards, where the teachers provide good models of behaviour, where [the pupils] are praised and given responsibility, where the general conditions are good, and where the lessons are well conducted" (Rutter *et al.*, 1979).

In the search for high quality outcomes in the future, education authorities must concentrate research on the transcendental question : why are some schools so successful and others such failures ? What are good standards ? What are good

models of behaviour ? What are generally good school conditions ? What constitutes a well-conducted lesson ?

It is also becoming increasingly essential for the schools to take into account all the external influences determining a young person's development, above all the central role of the family and the all-pervasive presence of the media. This will entail intensifying efforts to involve parents in the life of the school and helping them perform their duties as educators of their own children more effectively. It will also entail modifying the curriculum so as to complement and, where appropriate, to interpret the information, ideas and impressions that the young acquire from the media.

Pursuit of quality

The burden of this report is that the priority for the next ten years will be improvement of the quality of compulsory schooling. All OECD countries have made tremendous economic efforts during the past twenty years to invest in the material provision of schools and to carry out sweeping structural, organisational and curricular reforms. These efforts have brought considerable success.

So far, however, success has been measured largely in material terms. The next phase will call for emphasis on less tangible improvements which will necessarily prove more difficult to achieve than the fulfilment of quantitative targets. It will require education authorities at all levels to consider now what compulsory schooling should look like in ten or twenty years' time. What will society then be wanting from the schools and what will schools be wanting from society ?

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